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Window: The Magazine of Western Washington University, 2016, Volume 09, Issue 01

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WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY WINDOW

THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

FALL/WINTER 2016

Meet **Sabah Randhawa**

Western's 14th
President



Paint Bellingham Blue

Western's Alumni Association welcomed hundreds of students, alumni, employees and family members to the first Paint Bellingham Blue event, celebrating the beginning of the academic year.

The festival in downtown Bellingham's Depot Market Square, featuring vendors, food trucks, games and giveaways, culminated in the lighting of the newly refurbished sign atop the Bellingham Herald building. For the first time in the building's history, the iconic sign was alight in WWU-blue.



RALD

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BLUE
for
WWU





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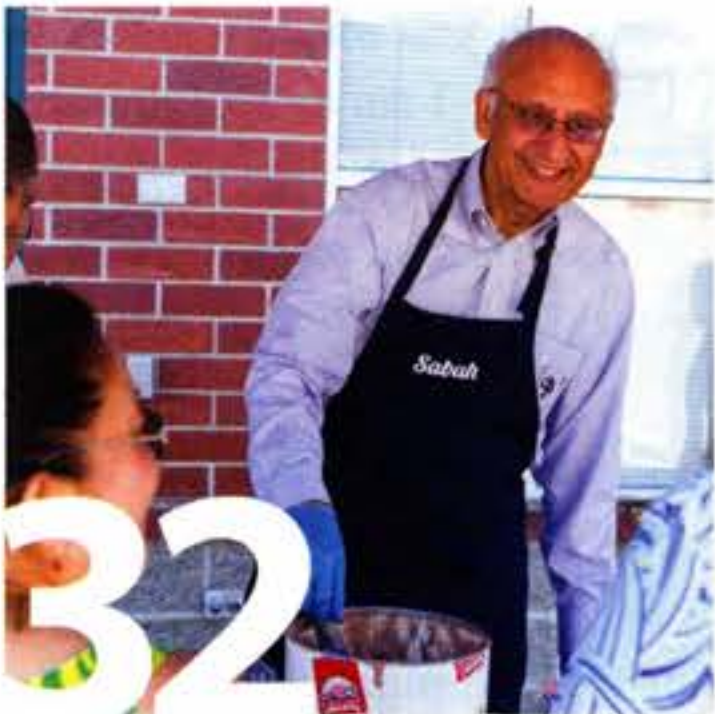
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On the cover: Sabah Randhawah on the steps of Old Main. Randhawa caught the attention of Western's presidential search committee for "his strong focus on student success, and his belief in the importance of higher education opening doors of opportunity to people from all walks of life." Photo by Rhys Logan ('11, Visual Journalism)

Image credit: ESO/M. Kornmesser



Message

from the President

**"If you want to go fast, go alone;
if you want to go far, go together"**

From the window of my new office in Old Main I can see students coming and going from Wilson Library, traversing those well-worn steps that every graduate of Western knows. I feel like I'm right in step with them.

Since Aug. 1, my first official day as Western's 14th president, I have been enrolled in my own course of study, learning all I can about Western from students, faculty, staff and alumni. I've also met with leaders, legislators and advocates who deeply appreciate the impact that Western and our graduates have in their communities. Throughout, I have been struck by the shared, passionate commitment to advancing Western into the future.

A vision of that future emerges with a key question: What story would others tell about Western at our 150th anniversary celebration? Where does our story go from here?

While I wouldn't presume to define Western's future, there are some national realities that I believe we must confront:

- Nationally, barely half of students enrolled in four-year colleges graduate within six years.
- Over the last 40 years, the percentage of students from families in the top income quartile who have a four-year degree has doubled, from 40 percent to 78 percent. By contrast, the rate for students from the bottom income quartile has not budged from 9 percent.
- An increasing percentage of university students nationwide come from the lower-income quartiles, which are also more racially and ethnically diverse.
- The national average student loan debt for graduates of the class of 2015 was about \$35,000, with total U.S. student loan debt being \$1.3 trillion—and rising.

The most important challenge facing universities is clear: Advance inclusive excellence by increasing the number of graduates, supporting student success, and closing the achievement gap for students from diverse, first-generation and underrepresented socioeconomic backgrounds.

Our vision of Western's future depends on the shared commitment of outstanding faculty and staff on campus and the support of our alumni off-campus. Together, we must articulate a compelling case for others to invest in our future. As a well-known African proverb states, "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together."

I am extraordinarily honored to serve as Western's 14th President, and to take this journey with you.

Sincerely,



Sabah Randhawa
President



Photo by Rhys Logan ('11)

WINDOW

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Window supports Western's commitment to assuring that all programs and
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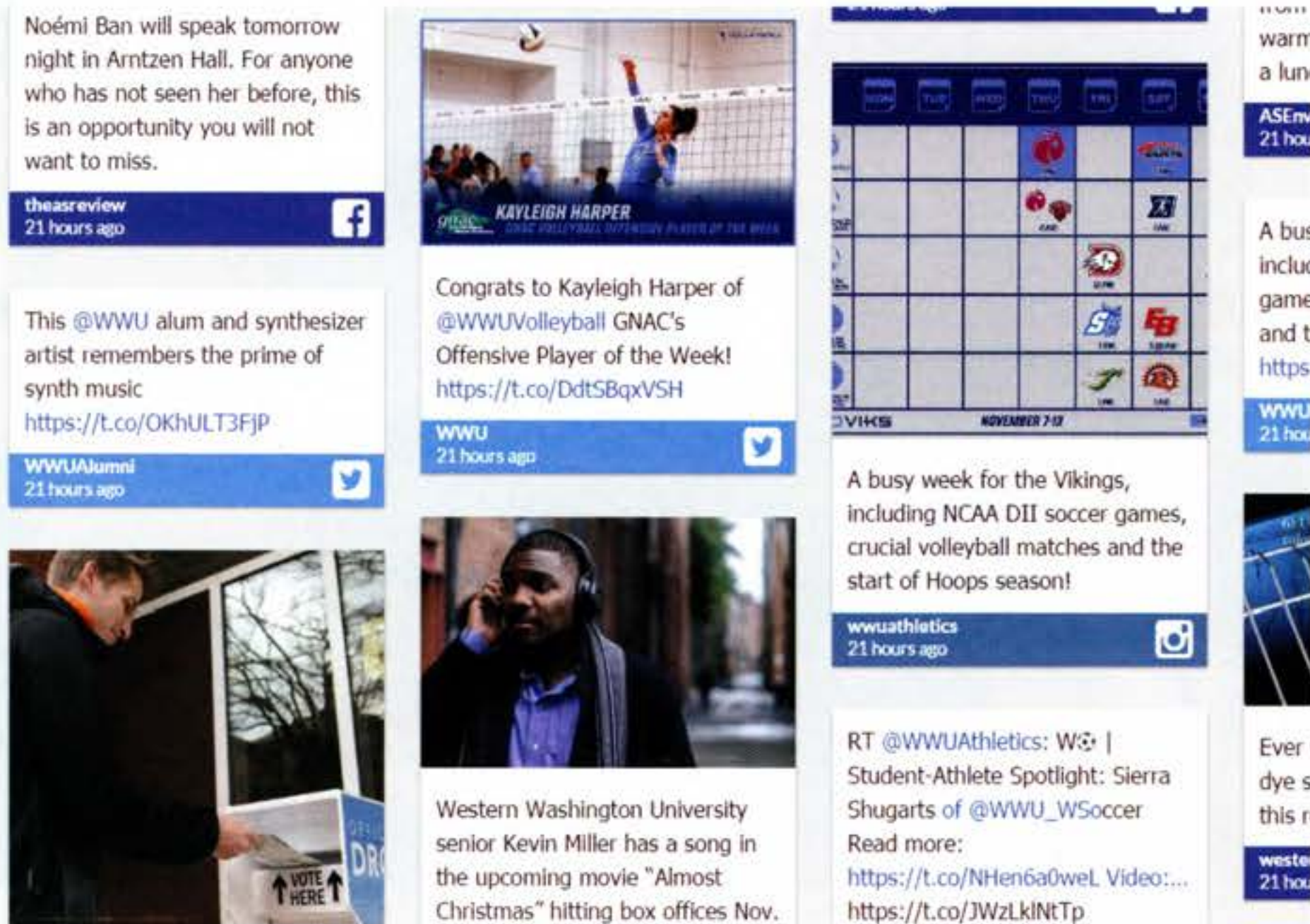


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Visit social.wwu.edu



Here are five things revealed about life at Western, recently seen at social.wwu.edu, where dozens of WWU-related social media feeds converge in one place:

1. Both of Western's soccer teams landed spots in the NCAA Division II national championships—and you can watch the moment the men's team learned they were headed to the tournament. Meanwhile, the Viking women were still rolling as we went to press. (@WWUathletics)
2. Western has more than 200 student clubs, from Quidditch to Kinesiology, Standup Comedy to Fly Fishing. (@WWU)
3. Alumni could enjoy appetizers before a soccer game at Harrington field, dinner at Zoolights at Point Defiance Zoo, and pick-up basketball on the same court where the Portland Trail Blazers play – all thanks to Alumni Association events. (@WWUAlumni)
4. WWU Design students had their short animation pieces projected recently onto the side of the seven-story Flatiron building in downtown Bellingham. (@www_cfpa)
5. French toast stuffed with Nutella was a popular lunch and dinner special in campus dining halls the day after Election Day. (@WWU_Dining)



Huxley College of the Environment Dean Steve Hollenhorst is one of several Huxley employees who are using Western's e-bikes to travel to meetings off-campus.

Photos by Rhys Logan ('11)



Pedal power, zip optional

WWU has a small fleet of electric bikes available to students, faculty and staff who want to check them out for a day or as long as a quarter.

The bikes, funded by the Sustainable Action Fund, have caught the attention of campus offices, too: The AS Publicity Center uses a cargo bike instead of a truck to make campus deliveries, and employees of Huxley College of the Environment cruise to off-campus meetings on an e-bike.

The Viking e-bike collection includes five bikes, such as Canadian eProdigy Jaspers "built for maximum comfort" and a Danish Butchers and Bicycles MK1-e tilt-trike. Each bike moves with pedal power with an optional assist from a quiet electric motor that kicks in when riders want a little help up hills, for example.

How do they ride? Tim Szymanowski, a bike enthusiast and an associate vice president of University Advancement, checked out a bike for Labor Day Weekend. "There was a sense of freedom and weightlessness that initially surprised me," he wrote on the Viking eBikes blog, "like some big benevolent hand gave me a nice shove from the back."

The Viking eBike team hopes more campus offices will bring e-bikes into their routines, cutting down on driving times, carbon pollution and parking demand. And someday, a third-party vendor could bring a share program to campus, making more e-bikes available to the campus community.

Learn more about Western's ebikes at wp.wwu.edu/vikingebikes.

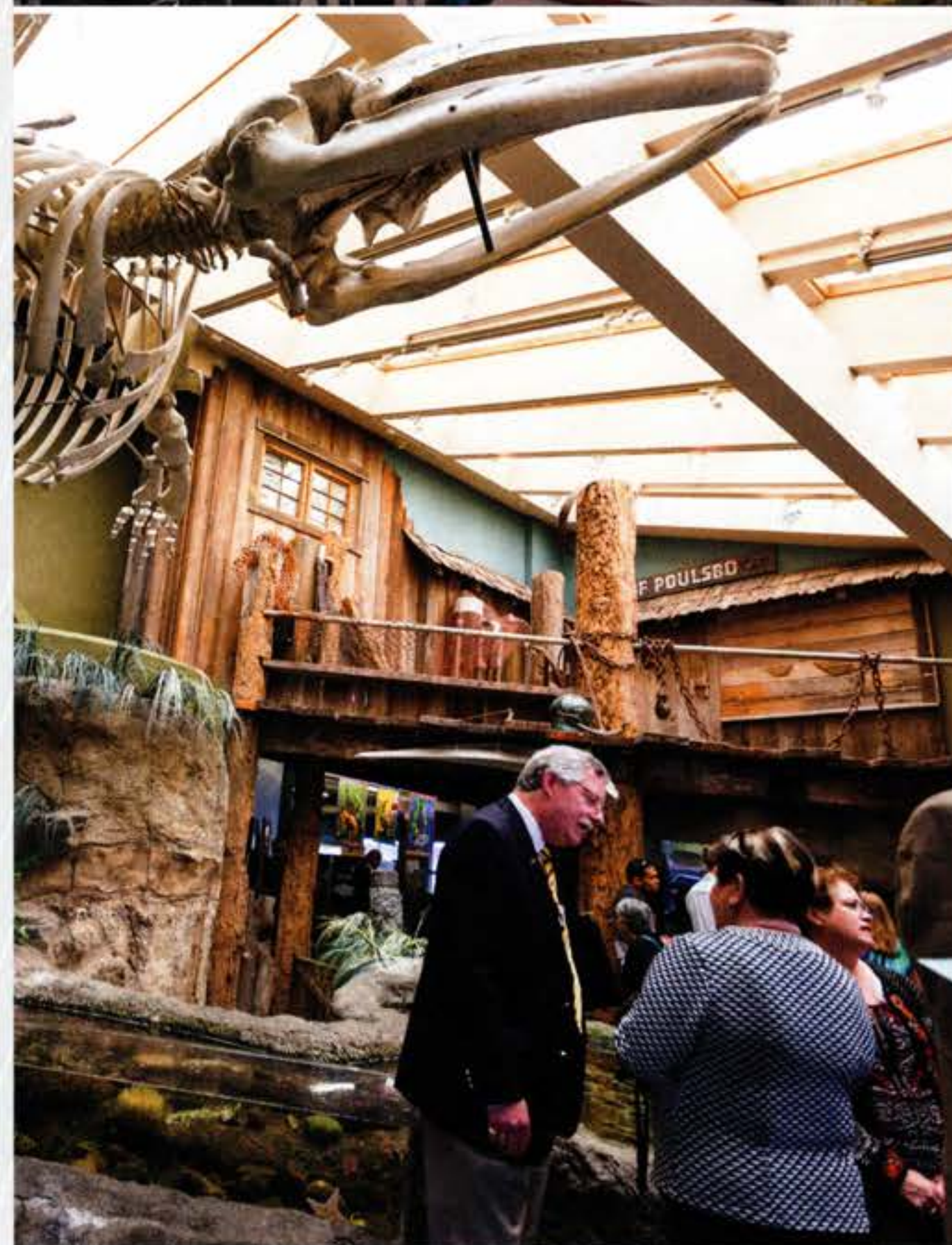


\$1,027

The amount Western's resident undergraduate tuition went down this fall thanks to the second of two annual tuition cuts (last year's reduction was \$360). The state Legislature's budget for '15-'17 cut resident undergraduate tuition at public universities—by 5 percent last year and 15 percent this year at Western—making Washington the only state in the nation to make such deep cuts in tuition. It was, no doubt, a welcome relief to students and families who saw tuition rise by double-digit increases for several years during the Great Recession.

Poulsbo marine center is now part of Western

Poulsbo's Marine Science Center changed its name to the SEA Discovery Center last spring when it became part of Western Washington University. Western is now in charge of the center's youth programs, floating lab, aquarium and museum located on Liberty Bay. The center already offers several hands-on programs for kids, including kids camps, field trips and evening events. Learn more at wp.wwu.edu/seacenterpoulsbo/.





Western offers free tuition to WWU students who have exhausted their veterans higher education benefits before completing their undergraduate degrees.

Photo by Rhys Logan ('11)

WWU offers tuition help to vets to finish their degrees

Military veterans attending Western on the GI Bill can keep going even if their veteran's benefits run out before they finish their bachelor's degrees.

Western is the first institution in the state to cover full tuition and fees for undergraduates who have exhausted their veterans' education benefits. Beginning this fall quarter, veterans who have completed at least 24 credits on the GI Bill at Western are eligible for the tuition and fee waiver.

About 150 veterans are going through Western on the Post 9/11 GI Bill. And most veterans complete their degrees before their benefits run out, says Ann Beck, Western's assistant director of Veteran's Services.

But each quarter, one or two Western students find their veteran's benefits won't last to graduation. One recently told Beck he was thinking about dropping out of Western and enrolling in a vocational program while he still had benefits left so he could complete on time. She told him to stick around, because help was on the way.

"For the veterans who run out of benefits, it is so frustrating, because they are pursuing a degree they care about and have an end career goal in mind," Beck says. "Suddenly, they are scrambling to figure out how to pay their tuition.

"They are committed to the Western community, and we want to show them the same commitment with this waiver. We want to see them through to the end."

Western's AS leads the state in getting students on the voter rolls

Western's student-run voter registration drive enrolled a record 3,475 new and updated student voters this fall, more than any other college or university in the state.

The Associated Students Representation and Engagement Programs coordinate the drive, with help from several volunteers from the Western Votes student club.

About 1,200 students registered during move-in weekend, says Rosa Rice-Pelepko, an Environmental Studies student from Shoreline and the REP Organizing and Outreach coordinator. Hundreds more signed up during the two-day Info Fair in Red Square before classes started, or with the volunteers with clipboards who roamed campus before the Oct. 10 registration deadline.

Western's voter drive is part of a statewide effort to build political power among college students. The Washington Student



Association, a lobbying group representing the state's college and university students, registers a total of about 6,000 students each year.

"We want students to have more voting power in Olympia," says Rice-Pelepko, whose job will now turn to other civic engagement projects. "Legislators know we do have a lot of voters, so it helps to keep them accountable."



Communication Studies Senior Sarah Helms of Sedro-Woolley joins other student videographers on location in La Conner for a "Western Window" story about Washington's new requirements that the state's tribal history, culture and government will be taught in public schools.

Catch 'Western Window' on television or online

"Western Window," a student-produced television magazine show that features profiles, original reports and in-depth interviews, can be seen on commercial and community TV throughout the Puget Sound, and online.

The show features a student perspective on faculty, students and alumni who are making a difference at Western and throughout the world. Here's where to catch the show:

- **From Vancouver, B.C., to Vancouver, Washington, on KVOS-TV12 (ME-TV):** in Bellingham/Whatcom County on Channel 12, in Greater Puget Sound on Channel 72
- **On satellite TV:** Dish Network Channel 35 and DirecTV Channel 12
- **Online at Western Window's homepage,** www.wvu.edu/westernwindowtv, where you can find catalogued archives of the show.
- **On Western's YouTube channel,** www.youtube.com/wvu; click on the Western Window TV Show playlist.

PROFESSIONALLY HILARIOUS

Theatre alum Rashawn Nadine Scott brings the jokes and 'moments of pure honesty' as a rising star at Chicago's famous Second City improv theater

By Daneet Steffens

Rashawn Nadine Scott ('11) has been a member of Chicago's illustrious Second City improv performers since 2014 when the Tacoma native won one of Second City's inaugural Bob Curry fellowships.

More recently, as part of the troupe's 104th revue, "Fool Me Twice, Déjà Vu," Scott was named a Hot New Face of Chicago Theater by the Chicago Tribune, whose chief theatre critic called her "one of the most interesting performers ever to emerge...at Second City."

High praise, considering that Second City helped launch the careers of the likes of Steve Carell, Tina Fey, Keegan-Michael Key and Amy Poehler, to name only a few.

Scott majored in Theatre Arts at Western, leaving in 2011 and heading to Chicago soon after. We caught up with her in between rehearsals for her new Second City show, its yet-untitled 105th revue.

You got your improv start through Western's Dead Parrot Society, didn't you?

Yes! I was really excited to be invited into that ensemble. My senior year we went to the national College Improv Tournament in Chicago and won! That was the first time I got to visit Chicago and I got a taste for it. I knew it was the place for improv; that spring-boarded me to come out here.

You were also very active in other groups, singing with The Primetime Band, and participating in student and regional theatrical productions. Which were your favorite roles?

Well, at Western, Peppermint Patty of "Snoopy" will always have a place in my heart—that whole Summerstock was really fun. But my favorite was Ruth in "The Pirates of Penzance"—it was a steampunk operetta and I had long dreads and a corset and all these weapons. Outside of Western, doing "Avenue Q" in 2012 with Seattle's Balagan Theatre was fun. I've always dreamed of being on "Sesame Street" and that's the closest I've gotten so far.

What do you like about the work you're doing now? What are some of the challenges?

I like the volume at which we do things: Eight shows a week for eight months at a time—that's the closest to a Broadway schedule I've ever gotten. There was one cast member for "Fool Me Twice..." who kept track of how many shows we had done and I think it was upwards of 280! And that doesn't count rehearsals. It's almost daunting: You think, "I've been saying these same words, this many times?!" But there's a connection with the audience that I felt; I knew how I wanted to manage myself on stage, how to come back from failures. You really have to have thick skin if you're going to do this kind of work, especially now, because this audience is so different from me—it's Midwest, predominantly white, middle class patrons who come in there. They see me, a black woman who doesn't look like them, doesn't sound like them and isn't going to bend to appease them. Being able to make an audience laugh while also getting to moments of pure honesty—sucking the air out of the room, but in a good way—it allows people to hear me, to trust that I am not attacking them, that I'm just speaking my truth and then getting them right back on my side with a joke. That turn is a technical skill I'm thankful for: All that training in those classes at Western—I'm just using all these skills and stringing them all together in the right way to make sure that I'm entertaining but also educating in the same breath.

Did Western make you funny? How did your time there inspire you to be the performer that you are today?

I've always been funny: I was funny before I arrived at Western—let's get that on the official record. But my classes at Western made me open up emotionally and face things that I knew were important to dive into. (Theatre Professor) Jim Lortz was one of the best teachers I had; he saw something in me that not a lot of other people saw. At Western, there were times where I'd be put in a box—there weren't many scenes that we did or parts that were given out or classes that reflected me. I was in



"I'm just speaking my truth and then getting them right back on my side with a joke."

Rashawn Nadine Scott ('11), a performer with Second City since 2014, was recently included in the Chicago Tribune's list of "Hot New Faces of Chicago Theatre."

Photo by John J. Kim/Chicago Tribune/TNS

an African-American studies class that was taught by a white man and I could feel every other student looking at me waiting for my response instead of letting me be a student like they were. Jim turned that around by giving me the power and control to make the decision to play parts that I didn't—quote unquote—necessarily fit into. And (Theatre Professor) Rich Brown encouraged you to dig down and access your muscle memory: He knew that you could get to these emotional places if you dug deep enough. Treat your body like a temple, he said. It's as much an instrument as your voice and your mind. He taught me discipline.

Finally, who are your comedic inspirations?

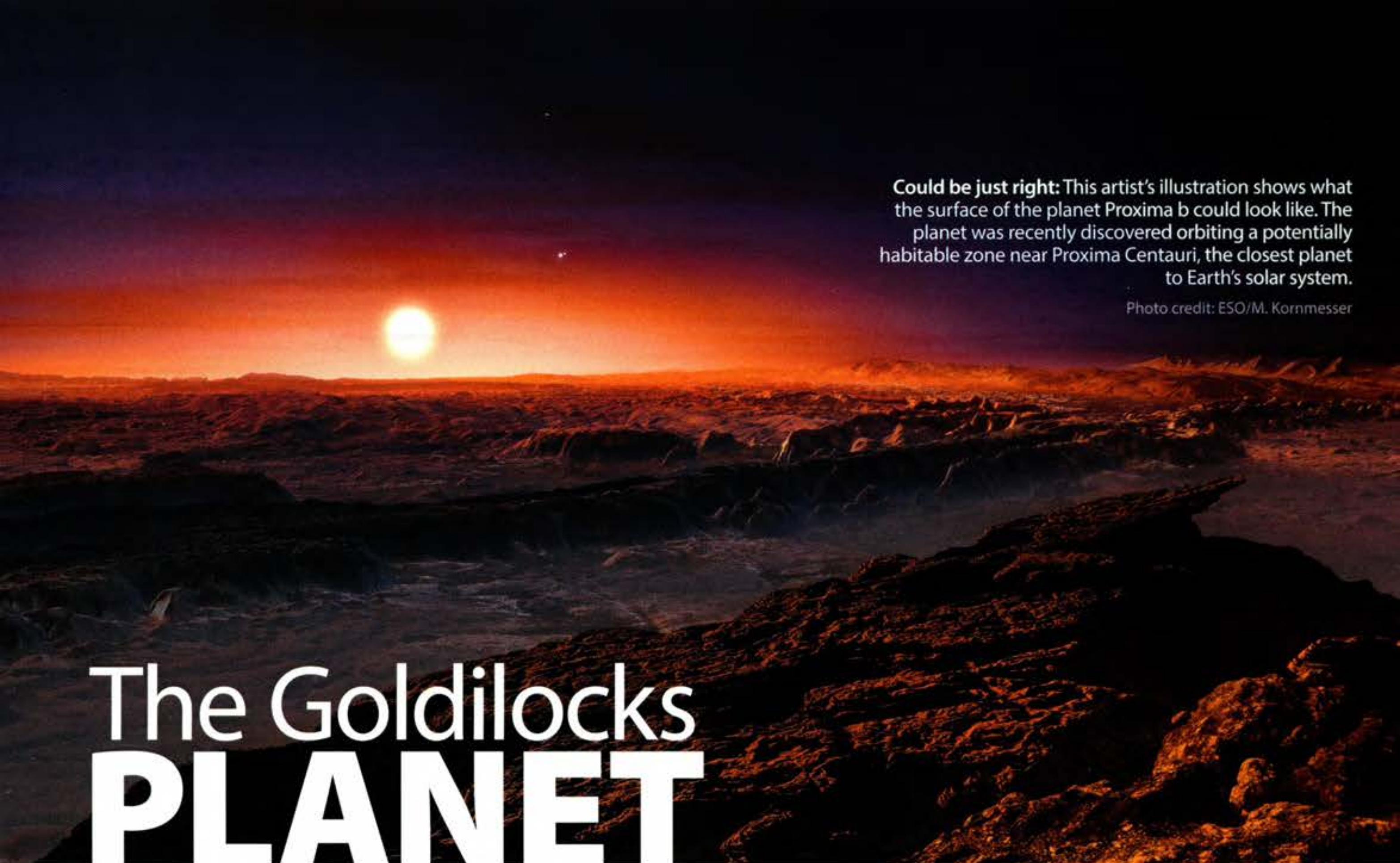
Edgar Blackmon, Tawny Newsome, Christina Anthony, Claudia Wallace (four Second City alumni), Dave Chapelle, Richard Pryor, Tracee Ellis Ross, Maya Rudolph—very funny people who allow themselves to look silly and serious at the same time.

Daneet Steffens is a freelance writer and critic whose work has appeared in Entertainment Weekly, TIME, LitHub and Time Out.

Comedic skills: Rashawn Nadine Scott (front, right) was funny before she came to Western ("Let's get that on the official record.") but she uses the skills she learned at Western during her improv performances "to make sure that I'm entertaining but also educating in the same breath."



Photo courtesy of Second City



Could be just right: This artist's illustration shows what the surface of the planet Proxima b could look like. The planet was recently discovered orbiting a potentially habitable zone near Proxima Centauri, the closest planet to Earth's solar system.

Photo credit: ESO/M. Kornmesser

The Goldilocks PLANET

The newly discovered planet Proxima b is not too hot or too cold.

Could life exist there?

By John Thompson

First, some numbers.

Astronomers estimate that there are at least 500 billion galaxies in the observable universe, with an average of about 100 billion stars each. And given that these stargazers believe one in every two stars has a rocky planet, you could say there are about 50 sextillion planets in the cosmos.

That's 5×10^{22} for all you number crunchers out there. For the rest of us, picture a 5 followed by 22 zeros.

To truly put that number into perspective (or further blow your mind), imagine counting every grain of sand on every beach and desert on this planet: You still wouldn't come close to the number of stars out there in the night sky.

But for all this discussion of impressively ridiculous numbers,

there is one more number that continues to fascinate astronomers: 1.

That's the number of planets, out of 50 sextillion, that we can confirm support life. Thankfully, we're on it.

Finding No. 2—the second planet to hold life—has been the quest of astronomers since Ptolemy began gazing up at the night sky from Alexandria in the first century.

Western's James Davenport, an NSF-funded postdoctoral research fellow in the Physics and Astronomy Department, is part of a group of astronomers hot on the chase for life outside our solar system, and after what he called “one of the biggest discoveries in astronomy in 25 years,” scientists may be onto the best chance to find life elsewhere: Proxima b.

About four light-years away from Earth sits Proxima Centauri, the closest star to our solar system, and orbiting it is its just-discovered companion, a small planet that, for now at least, holds the unassuming name of Proxima b.

In interstellar terms, Proxima b is a next-door neighbor and the closest planet to our solar system, even though a probe such as Voyager, if launched today, would take about 75,000 years to reach it.

“We've discovered other planets before, but not this close to us,” says Davenport. “What is doubly exciting is that Proxima b sits right in the ‘Goldilocks Zone’ of its parent star – not too close for the heat to boil off the planet's atmosphere, not too far for it to be a ball of ice. It's at just the right distance for a pleasant atmosphere and because of that, potentially, life.”

But not all the news is good.

Davenport is part of a five-person team led by David Kipping at Columbia University researching the nasty tendency of Proxima Centauri, the parent star, to produce massive stellar flares that can be 10 times bigger than anything produced by our sun. These superflares produce a huge bombardment of X-rays and ultraviolet rays, which could strip the atmosphere from nearby planets.

"It would take years for our planet to recover from one of these types of superflares, based on the best models," Davenport says. "But Proxima emits them about eight times a year, and mostly likely has been doing so for quite some time."

Because we know so little about Proxima b, and it will take years of intense study before we can glean much from the planet, Davenport says the million-dollar question—could anything live there?—remains unanswerable, for now.

"There are a ton of theories that support the ability of the planet to 'shield itself' from the flares, so we can't write it off just yet," he says. "To get a better look at the planet, we'll need to use something big like the Hubble or James-Webb space telescope."

For now, the team gathers its solar-flare data from images from the MOST space telescope, a smaller, suitcase-sized Canadian telescope launched 13 years ago.

"MOST is perfect for our needs, as we can have it staring at Proxima for weeks at a time," Davenport says.

The other members of Davenport's team are Kipping, Dimitar Sasselov of Harvard University, Jaymie Matthews of the University of British Columbia, and

Chris Cameron of Cape Breton University in Nova Scotia. The team's research was published in September in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters*, and they are continuing to examine the data for signs of how the flares could affect, for good or for ill, the ability of the planet to harbor life.

"The eye of the science world is about to turn to Proxima b," he says.

And perhaps, as our science evolves and we learn more about our neighbor, we might actually be able to turn that 1 to a 2, with at least 50 sextillion to go.

John Thompson is the assistant director of Western's Office of Communication and Marketing. If he had to count all the grains of sand on every beach on Earth, he'd start on North Carolina's Outer Banks.



Photo by Rhys Logan ('11)

JAMES DAVENPORT

At Western, Davenport works with several WWU students on a larger research project: determining how rates of stellar flares and superflares change as stars such as Proxima Centauri and the Sun age. Those changes can greatly affect when and where life can form, Davenport says.

Davenport also writes about data visualization in his blog "If We Assume," where he shares more detail about stellar flares and explores questions such as, "Do players who smile in their photos play better football?"



Rediscovering *Higginson*

World-famous author Ella Higginson watched Western grow from her house on High Street. English Professor Laura Laffrado helps us see her again.

By Daneet Steffens

Before Western was the Bellingham State Normal School, before there was even a campus on Sehome Hill, a house with a commanding view of Bellingham Bay sat next to what would later become Mathes Hall.

Its inhabitants, Ella and Russell Higginson, watched the campus grow. They boarded students, Ella became close friends with pioneering faculty member Catherine Montgomery, and pharmacist Russell was an inaugural member of the Board of Trustees. Today, the name of Higginson Hall recognizes the couple's commitment to what would become Western Washington University.

But as WWU English Professor Laura Laffrado discovered, there's an even more impressive Higginson story to be told.

At the turn of the last century, Ella Higginson was a writer so famous that her 1902 novel, "Mariella, of Out West," couldn't be bound quickly enough to keep up with demand. Her award-winning short stories—with sly twists that would make O. Henry and Edith Wharton proud—were published in Harper's Bazaar, McClure's and Collier's along with such luminaries as Arthur Conan Doyle, Henry James and Sarah Orne Jewett. Her poems were widely published and set to music; she was the first poet laureate of Washington.

In her 2015 book, "The Selected Writings of Ella Higginson: Inventing Pacific Northwest Literature," Laffrado offers a rich showcase of Higginson's work, from poems celebrating the beau-

On the verge of fame: Ella Higginson, already a published author at 23, in 1885, the year she married Russell Higginson, and the year she began publishing under her own name. For the next three decades, Ella Higginson was a prolific writer of short stories and poems that helped define the Pacific Northwest's sense of place in American literature.

Archive photos: Ella Higginson Papers,
Center for Pacific Northwest Studies,
Western Libraries Heritage Resources

ty of Bellingham's landscape—"Mount Baker's noble dome," "This cool, blue sapphire, Puget Sound"—to stories illuminating the acts of pettiness and kindness that abounded in Pacific Northwest frontier communities.

Her work drew raves—the San Francisco Examiner, in a review of "Mariella," said: "Jack London of Oakland and Ella Higginson of Seattle are putting forth more and better works of fiction than any other writers on the Coast." Higginson was, as Laffrado notes, "the one who put the Pacific Northwest on the literary map."

As the local literary celebrity, Higginson was commissioned by George Williston Nash, the Normal School's second president, to write her 1904 poem celebrating the institution. A line from it, "Here is the home of color and of light," is etched above the main entrance to Edens Hall without Higginson's byline; she was so famous at the time, no one could imagine anybody would forget who wrote those words.

"That poem, 'The College By the Sea,' does such a beautiful job," says Laffrado.

"When I first heard about it, I was very curious because Higginson did not have a college education. I wondered what it was like for her to live across from a college that was being built up around her house. And what she does is perfect: She writes about the setting as though—and I agree with this—the best place for learning anything is the setting *itself*."

Just as many of today's students and alumni acknowledge that coming to Bellingham is a critical part of coming to Western? "Exactly! The two are intertwined. You can't separate them."

But, like so many writers after World War I, Higginson fell into obscurity. After Higginson died in 1940, her friend Catherine Montgomery protected her literary estate, which ultimately landed at the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies. When Laffrado was there, researching forgotten 19th century women writers, she couldn't believe the treasure trove she found.

"At first I thought, 'OK, this looks like some Pacific Northwest woman writer.' But the further I got—and there were 12 linear feet of papers in her archive!—I realized, 'Oh, this was a really *prolific* Pacific Northwest woman writer!' Then I started uncovering more about her awards, and she became, 'a really prolific, *famous* Pacific Northwest woman writer!' It just kept building and building and building."

Higginson was also highly enterprising. She managed her own contracts, negotiating—and receiving—higher fees. In preparation for a book on Alaska, she taught herself photography. She was a vocal animal rights advocate and, as campaign manager and writer, she successfully got Frances C. Axtell elected in 1912 as one of the first two female members of the Washington State Legislature. Her house, a Bellingham landmark, was featured on postcards; Laffrado keeps one in her desk from 1906 that reads: "This is where your cousin is spending her

summer in the Normal School and one block from this, our famous Western author's house. Will write soon."

"Students would see Higginson working in her rose garden," says Laffrado. "She walked her dogs on campus, and she donated many books to what became Wilson Library. Her connection was not just to the school, but to its students—she was part of the experience that they were having as young people in this new school. Western was part of her own backyard."

Thanks to Laffrado's work, Western students and others are rediscovering Higginson. Laffrado is approaching publishers about reprinting Higginson's "Mariella" novel. A Bellingham-based film company, Talking to Crows, is producing her unpublished comedic screenplay, "Just Like the Men," about a Frances Axtell character running for office.

A visit to the Ella Higginson Facebook page reveals two WWU students on whom Higginson has clearly made her mark: One shows off a new tattoo with the Edens Hall phrase, the other has posted a 15-second rap honoring Higginson.

Ella would be proud.

Daneet Steffens is a writer, editor and critic whose favorite Ella Higginson story—so far—is "M'liss's Child." She first learned about Higginson while writing for the Western Stands for Washington Campaign. Steffens' work has appeared in the Boston Globe, Guardian Weekly, Time and other publications.



Famous poem: Higginson was an early master of self-branding: After the massive popularity of her 1890 poem—you may still find it on St. Patrick's Day cards—she asked her publishers to include four-leaf clovers in the designs of her other books.

Higginson revealed: English Professor Laura Laffrado was amazed at how prolific Higginson was, but also how she was a part of Western students' lives.



Christopher Horsethief
(’94, Fairhaven College of
Interdisciplinary Studies) works
with tribes around North America
to revitalize their languages. He
developed an app now used by
about 25 tribes that allows users
to text in indigenous languages.

Photo by: Daniel Berman (’12, Visual Journalism)



Giving new life to the words

Alumni are helping tribes throughout the Northwest revitalize indigenous languages before they're lost forever

By Jemma Everyhope-Roser

Danica Sterud Miller ('00, English) is a member of the Puyallup Tribe and grew up in Fife on the Puyallup Indian Reservation in a family active in tribal affairs.

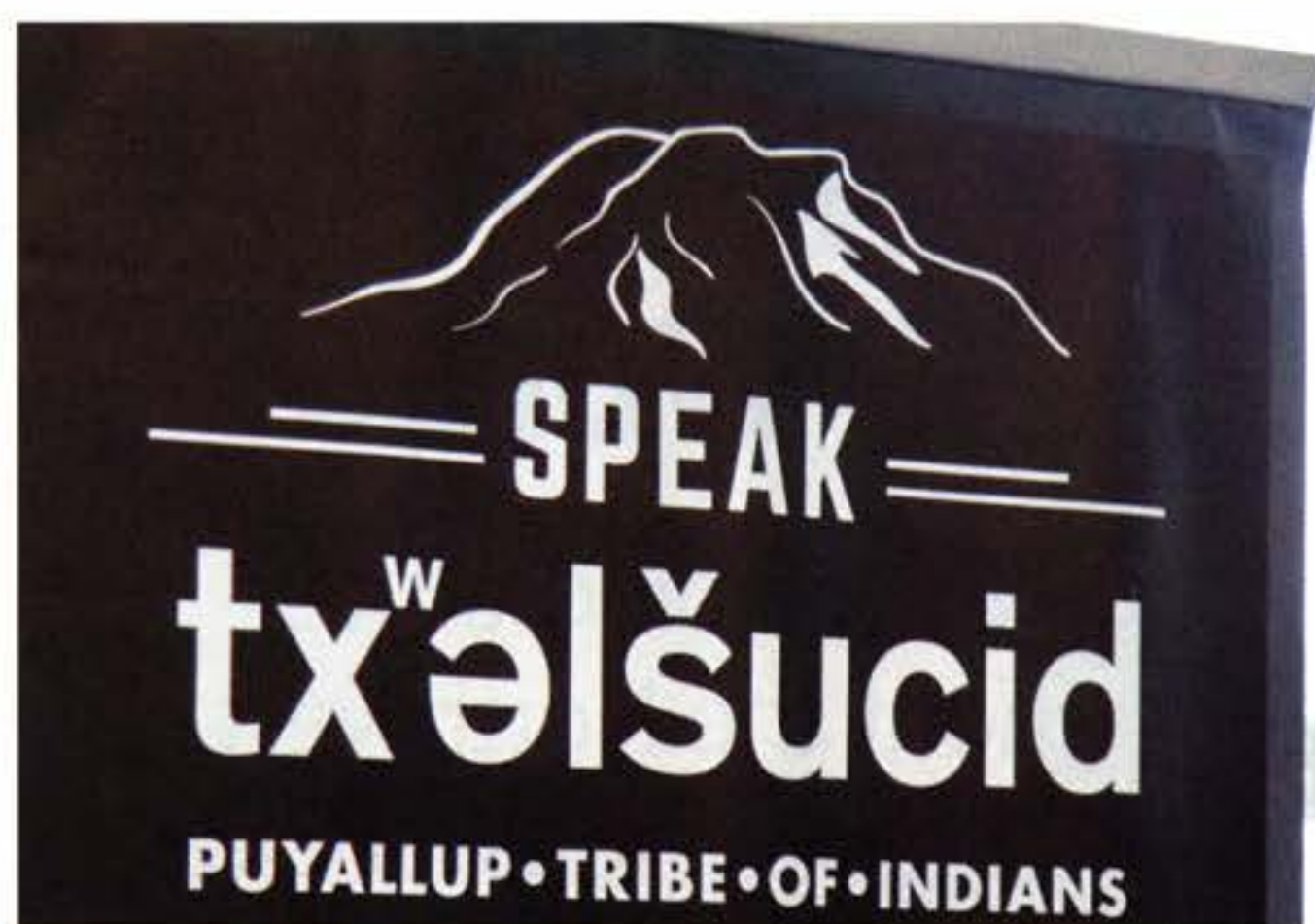
But Miller had never heard conversational Lushootseed, the language traditionally spoken by the Puyallup and several other Northwest tribes, until she was an undergraduate in English Professor Kristin Denham's Coastal Salish literature class. Denham had invited guest speaker Vi Hilbert, a fluent Lushootseed speaker.

"It was powerful, exciting," Miller says of listening to Hilbert, who died in 2008. Although Miller's cousin directs the Puyallup language program and another cousin is now Lushootseed's most fluent speaker, Miller grew up hearing only a few Lushootseed exclamations, not more.

That's not a surprise considering that the Northwest has been dubbed a global hotspot for language loss by National Geographic and the Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages. Diverse indigenous languages are dying out—but several WWU alumni are involved in documenting and revitalizing them before they vanish.

A large part of the disappearance of these languages can be traced to government boarding schools, which forcibly enrolled indigenous children at 5 or even younger, and were created to systematically annihilate indigenous language and culture. Generations of children were severely punished for speaking the languages they learned from their families.

"I grew up knowing to 'talk Indian' would be to have your children taken away and sent into foster care," Miller says.



LUSHOOTSEED

Traditionally spoken by the Puyallup and several other Northwest tribes.

?u?ušəbiciid čəd: "In Lushootseed, there is no word for 'romantic' love; instead love is expressed as a type of compassion," says Danica Sterud Miller ('00, English).

"So instead of saying I love you, you would say, I have compassion for you. It's a phrase that I really think reveals so much about Lushootseed culture, in terms of trust and generosity."



Photos courtesy of University of Washington Tacoma

Ceremonial opening: David Duenas drums during the opening ceremony of The Lushootseed Language Institute, which is supported by the Puyallup Tribe and offers training to teachers, both official and unofficial, who will then teach others.

Lushootseed Institute

Hearing Lushootseed in Denham's undergraduate class continues to influence Miller's work nearly 20 years later. After completing her doctoral degree in English at Fordham University in 2013, Miller is now an assistant professor of American Indian Studies at University of Washington Tacoma. She also organizes a summer Lushootseed Language Institute that gives priority registration to teachers—both official and unofficial—in the community.

"The institute's about how to revitalize language in your community," Miller says. The classes are funded largely by a grant from the Puyallup Tribal Council.

One way students incorporate Lushootseed into their daily lives is by setting up a "Lushootseed-only" area in their homes. People often select their kitchens, Miller says, though one beginner made her Lushootseed domain out of a particularly tempting armchair. Anyone who sat in it had to speak Lushootseed.

Even though Miller knew her people's history with boarding schools, she says she went into teaching naively, with no idea some of her students had families who had been traumatized in the boarding schools. The wounds still hurt: Some students cried in class.

Denham, at Western, says many of her students have never heard of the boarding schools. "The effects aren't well-understood by students," she says. "I show them pictures of Tulalip boarding school just down the road."

The U.S. Indian boarding schools were created in the mid-1800s and continued past the 1970s. Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, founded 1880, is widely known to be the first. Its founder, Capt. Richard Henry Pratt, said: "A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one... In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man."

Canadian residential schools, set up by the Canadian government starting in 1876 and administered by churches, operated on a similar model. Duncan Campbell Scott, a government official, wrote that the 50 percent mortality rate in the schools should not deter other officials from the "final solution of our Indian problem."

Christopher Horsethief ('94, Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies) and his family live with the aftermath of the Canadian residential schools. Horsethief is a member of the ʔa•kiskq̓nuk First Nation located just outside of Windermere, British Columbia. His grandparents lived in interior British Columbia on an Indian reserve—the Canadian

"It is fun, the most fun I've ever had in an academic setting."



Danica Sterud Miller ('00, English) is a faculty member of the University of Washington Tacoma and directs a summer Lushootseed language program.

term for reservation—with their seven children. After the eldest four were forced into the residential schools, Horsethief's grandparents kidnapped their remaining three children and fled to the state of Washington.

"They left everything behind," Horsethief says. "They gave up everything, their community."

A texting app for indigenous languages

Horsethief, who completed his doctorate at Gonzaga University in Leadership Studies in 2012, works with tribes around North America, particularly in the Columbia River area, to revitalize their languages. He developed an app now used by about 25 tribes that allows users to text in indigenous languages.

Horsethief also draws upon his doctoral research in organizational theory to work with tribal members on language revitalization as central to cultural resiliency.

In the 1940s and 1950s, Horsethief says, many of Washington's migrant agricultural workers were indigenous people like his own family. His grandparents' three younger children were eventually placed in foster care because officials deemed the seminomadic lifestyle "inappropriate."

"Someone once asked me if I thought my grandparents were justified in taking those three younger kids," Horsethief says, "The four uncles and aunts of mine who went to the residential school all died brutal alcohol- and drug-related deaths. I never met them, never once met one. The three kidnapped away who ended up in the States all ended up in foster care together and those three are still alive together. So yes, I believe my

grandparents were justified."

Because indigenous children were beaten and abused for speaking their language, many began to view their language as something that shouldn't be passed along, in order to protect their children. After a hundred years, these languages began to fade.

The older generation has a sense of guilt, Horsethief says, about not passing the language on. He tells them, "Residential, boarding school education wasn't an accident. It was purposeful. It was sustained. It was an attempt to destroy our language and culture. So don't feel bad about it. This

is your chance to get involved.' And this is a really hard process for people to have to go through."

Horsethief grew up in Bellingham away from Ktunaxa, the language spoken by his grandparents' tribe, pronounced "k-toon-nah-ha." After graduating from Western, Horsethief moved to just outside Cranbrook, B.C., the center of the Ktunaxa speech community, then called St. Mary's Indian Band or ʔaqam. Horsethief has long been interested in languages—he grew up learning Spanish and English together for 3 1/2 years—so he tackled Ktunaxa.

Learning it became a way for Horsethief to connect with his community. His willingness to make mistakes and not be discouraged allowed him to show older generations how important this is to him, while the speakers' willingness to give him language tied him back into the cultural world.

Most learners, like Horsethief, come to their indigenous language as an adult, which complicates language revitalization. Because adults don't learn language with the same facility as children, they simplify grammar, often developing an English-based pidgin.

"It's not really the language," Horsethief says, "and that starts to make an impact on how the language makes sense or is used to encode cultural information. Some of our words for most of the basic ways we solve problems are different from English. They're more in-depth."

Cultural clues in the language

"It's ethically complicated to even say it's a tragedy that the languages are dying, though that's the general notion," says Western's Kristin Denham, "when many communities have matters of much more immediate concerns such as poverty, addiction, and economic development. But those turn out to be quite intertwined with language."

Sometimes, Miller says, the benefits are practical. After

"Some of our words for most of the basic ways we solve problems are different from English. They're more in-depth."

KTUNAXA

Ktunaxa is a linguistic isolate that evolved separately from the nearby Salish languages and is spoken in interior British Columbia down through Washington, Idaho and Montana.

A few words:

hu·c sakiʔ cʰamunaʔa'ni: a conversation (mechanical back-and-forth)

ʔukiniʔwiytik: A group conversing to solve problems (thinking one way).

wiʔqapeitam: Accountability (reciprocal or mutual respect)

ka·kʰukaqwaʔa: Our language (the sounds we make to one another)

ʔa·kuqʰiʔ: Our written language (the markings)

wupnik natanik: Our word for technology (new times)

the Fish Wars and the Boldt Decision, 50 percent of shellfish catches started going to the local tribes. But the state argued that the tribes had no rights to the valuable geoduck harvest, because they could not prove a history of possessing harvesting technology.

Miller says, “A Lushootseed linguist won the case by proving that geoduck is a Lushootseed word and establishing that white settlers learned how to hunt geoduck from us.”

Sometimes, the benefits are deeper, more complex.

“Every community, from two-person friendships to families to entire societies, forms culture,” says Horsethief. He describes culture as the residue of group decision-making. “You end up building over time these deep structures to help you make sense of the world—structures like language, family, history, spirituality, philosophy, a sense of purpose and identity—and those deep structures allow you to coordinate social activity and give you the tools you need to solve a problem.

“Colonization,” Horsethief says, “is when one group of people takes control of another group—even if they think they’re doing the right thing, if they think they’re helping—and they start forcibly damaging these deep structures. You create disorder in the system the group uses to solve their problems.

“Ktunaxa helps me face the world with a whole other set of problem-solving tools,” Horsethief says. “It’s like learning any second language. That’s what people don’t understand. Today Ktunaxa is our second language, English is our first language. We’re not trying to move away from English, we’re trying to have this other layer, this deeper layer, that maybe English isn’t so great at doing.”

‘This is a decolonizing act’

Miller describes the Lushootseed Language Institute as a success, a revitalization rather than language learning. Teachers from local Indian schools, as well as linguists and native students attended. Some passed the passion for language along. Miller has seen videos of local middle schoolers speaking Lushootseed and playing basketball.

“It’s not like the stereotypes we see of the Indian in pop culture,” she says. “This is a decolonizing act. It is fun, the most fun I’ve ever had in an academic setting. It’s a powerful experience. It engages trauma, yet it is so exciting.”

Miller says acquiring fluency in Lushootseed is one of her top-three life goals. Yet even as a nonspeaker, she finds there’s still room for her in the language community: “I hope this will inspire other community members suffering from language loss to get involved.”

Jemma Everyhope-Roser is a freelance writer and editor and a program assistant in Western’s Office of Communication and Marketing.

OTHER WWU ALUMNI WHO WORK IN INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE PRESERVATION

MICHAEL SHEPARD

When Shepard (’02, Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration; ’07, M.A., Anthropology) was working on his master’s degree at Western, he began working with the Lummi Indian Nation, which has language programs in both Lummi Tribal Schools and the Ferndale School District. Today, after completing



his doctorate in Cultural Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, he teaches online/hybrid courses in cultural sustainability and environmental studies for Goucher College. He also works closely with Ted Solomon, the Lummi Language Program director, to find grant funding for language teacher training as well as an electronic archive for the tribe’s language documentation. Giving students better access to documents and recordings such as field notes, songs, stories and audio recordings would be a great help to Lummi language learners, Shepard says. But the sensitive cultural materials are closely linked to the tribe’s sovereignty, he adds, so tribal leaders want to ensure the files would be very safe and access would be controlled.

RUSSELL HUGO

Hugo (’06, Linguistics), another former student of English Professor Kristin Denham, recently completed a Ph.D. from the University of Washington and works at the UW Language Learning Center. Hugo, who studied the effects of technology in learning endangered languages, cautions against pre-



sending technology as an “easy” solution to teach new speakers. Bad tools and limited content that are not pedagogically sound can set up language learners for failure and discourage them from continuing, he says. They can also be very expensive. Instead, he suggests, technological solutions must be centered on the content rather than delivery. Communities are better off strategically developing smaller projects that can also be integrated into a larger-scale project like an online textbook or course. His next projects: learning more about effective Indigenous language education advocacy and further developing an online course for the Yakima language.

Cold War cooperation: As seen in this photo by Tobey Sanford that appeared in Life Magazine, the U.S.-Soviet Marine Resources Co. partnership captured the imagination of the media in the 1970s and '80s, when cooperation between the two nuclear powers was extremely rare. But Bellingham Cold Storage owner Jim Talbot spearheaded a partnership with the state-controlled Russian fishing industry to catch and process hake in Pacific Northwest waters. Talbot later leveraged his Russian connections to build bridges for Western faculty and students.



An improbable fish story

A Bellingham fishing company built a business partnership with the Soviets—and brought home some Russian connections for Western

By John Stark

Fresh from his 1987 graduation as a Yale University Russian history major, young Stowe Talbot found himself on the bridge of a Soviet factory trawler in the Bering Sea, testing out his Russian language skills with the captain as Soviet fishermen unloaded nets bulging with tons of Pacific hake.

“After four years of academic Russian, I was not as fluent as I thought I should be,” Talbot says. “I learned all the Russian swearwords.”

It was Talbot’s first big job in the family business. His father, Jim Talbot, owned Bellingham Cold Storage, and under the elder Talbot’s leadership, that company had forged an improbable partnership with the state-controlled Soviet fishing industry when relations between the two nuclear superpowers seemed to be at a low point.

The partnership appeared logical in purely business terms: Americans had smaller fishing trawlers with the legal right to harvest the hake in U.S. territorial waters—but there was no U.S. demand for hake and they had nowhere to take the perishable catch for processing. The Russians had big factory ships that could clean and freeze the hake at sea, and they had access to millions of Russians more than happy to eat them—but U.S. law forbade them from catching fish within 200 miles of American shores.

Jim Talbot had to convince two sets of skeptical government officials that bridging the Cold War divide to make some money on seafood was a good idea, in an era when there were frequent news reports of Soviet “fishing vessels” loaded with electronic gear, running surveillance operations just off our coastline.

Against all odds, the governments eventually agreed, and American skippers quickly overcame their own misgivings and

began bringing catches to their new partners in 1978. The joint venture was known as Marine Resources Co., and had offices in Seattle and Vladivostok, Russia.

Stowe Talbot says the Russian vessels were big enough to be stable even during North Pacific storms, so seasickness was never an issue for him. The vessels had large crews, including those who operated and maintained the vessels themselves, and those who had the humbler task of cleaning the catch. One of the vessels that Talbot served on had 200 men and women aboard.

Eventually, U.S. fisheries entrepreneurs built their own processing ships, and the binational fishing effort ended in 1991.

Want to go to Vladivostok?

But years after the last load of squirming fish had been dumped into the hold of a Russian factory ship, Jim Talbot was able to use his Russian connections to build links between Russia and Western and its Huxley College of the Environment, as well as to the city of Bellingham.

Jim Talbot, who died in 2014, served on the WWU Foundation Board in the late 1990s. He and his wife Joyce later established the James and Joyce Talbot Scholarship in the College of Fine and Performing Arts.

Talbot was eager to build connections between Western and the Russians, even though there was no obvious business angle.

“He is one of the people I am most proud to have known in my life,” former Huxley Dean Brad Smith says of Talbot. “He was very humble. You’d never know he had two dimes to rub together.”

Smith says he had never met Talbot before he showed up in Smith’s Huxley office one day in the early 1990s to ask if Smith



Photos courtesy of Stowe Talbot



The Negotiations: (Top) Jim Talbot (left) and Bellingham accountant Dick Metcalf traveled to Moscow in 1975 to negotiate the terms of the joint fishing venture with the Soviet Union.

Shared catch: (Below) U.S. fishing vessels harvested hake, a fish with little market in the U.S. Russians were happy to buy hake, but Soviet fishing vessels were prohibited from fishing in U.S. waters. The solution: U.S. boats brought fresh-caught hake to Soviet processing ships.

might be interested in building academic relationships with the school then known as Far Eastern State University in Vladivostok. As a key Russian naval base, that port city near the Chinese border had long been off limits to Westerners. But by the 1990s, Russia was easing its restrictions a bit and Talbot had cultivated business connections there.

Smith, who had studied in the Soviet Union as an undergraduate, liked the idea.

Not long afterward, Smith found himself in Vladivostok with Talbot, talking to people at the university. Smith addressed some classes and talked to Russian environmental scientists, who were enthusiastic about bringing Russian students to Bellingham.

Eventually, Smith says, Russian students came to WWU to audit classes and tour the area to see how Americans were con-

fronting environmental issues. They visited the city wastewater treatment plant, national parks, and the pollution controls in place at the Georgia-Pacific Corp. pulp and tissue mill then operating on Bellingham Bay.

The Russians' educational experiences had stressed memorization rather than creativity, Smith says.

"They were the kind of student that can recite the periodic chart, but if you asked them how a wastewater treatment plant works, they couldn't tell you," Smith says.

When they visited Bellingham's wastewater plant, they told Smith they were certain that Vladivostok had something similar. Smith told them their city was piping its sewage directly into Peter the Great Bay.

When they got back to Russia, the students got to work on that. With support from WWU, the university in Vladivostok organized a 1994 sustainability conference focused on their bay.

Robin Matthews, director of the Institute for Watershed Studies at Huxley, traveled to Vladivostok to participate in the conference. She told the Russians how university, business, community and state and local government officials had joined forces to protect Lake Whatcom, the source of Bellingham's water supply.

Matthews saw Russian scientists getting their work done amid conditions that American scientists might have considered intolerable. "They couldn't really rely on electricity being there," Matthews says.

The Russian scientists did all their math by hand, and then checked their work on computers during the periods when the power was on.

Her most harrowing moment came during a bus ride with the U.S. delegation, from the port city of Nakhodka to Vladivostok.

"It was getting very dark and the bus started filling with smoke," Matthews recalls.

The bus driver didn't seem too concerned, but eventually he heeded his passengers' pleas and stopped the bus. Then—lacking a flashlight—he soaked rags in some kind of flammable liquid and used the flame as a light source as he crawled under the bus to figure out what was wrong.

A balky brake was to blame. The driver hammered on it until it was ready to behave, and everyone got back on the bus to finish the trip.

Matthews was impressed by Russians' eagerness to work on environmental issues even as they struggled with shortages of so many things that Americans think of as necessities.

"I found that just humbling," Matthews says. "We tend to want to set our human needs first and ecological needs second. I was stunned."

Despite the obstacles they faced, Smith said the Russian students were quick to recognize the value of what they heard and

Jim Talbot's son Stowe returned to Nakhodka, Russia, in 2014, with a U.S. delegation to commemorate the fishing partnership.



saw during their time at Western.

"Sustainability was a new concept in their vernacular," Smith says, adding that the students went home to apply the things they had learned at WWU.

"They all went on to really solid careers that did involve the environment," Smith says.

A small number of WWU graduate students also had opportunities to study in Russia stemming from this exchange, Smith says.

Stowe Talbot, Jim Talbot's son, still owns Bellingham Cold Storage. While the fishing venture ended in 1991, the partnership survived for another 10 years, with Russian vessels coming into Seattle for maintenance until that business also faded out as economic conditions changed.

Stowe Talbot and his sister Jane later donated \$100,000 to Huxley College in honor of their father, setting up the James G. Talbot Fund for Sustainability Studies at Huxley College of the Environment.

"I give a lot of kudos to my dad for sticking with it and trying something, when everyone told him it couldn't be done," Stowe Talbot says. "It was financially successful, but the more lasting and important result was all the friendships that were formed by the people who worked at the company over the years."

Common interests will bridge the divide

Stowe Talbot says he would welcome the opportunity to do business with Russians again, but the immediate prospects for that appear bleak.

"The rule of law is so much less than it was then," Talbot says. "It's a very risky environment in which to be doing business."

"People say it's more of a free enterprise system now and that's true. But it's not a level playing field, where the hardest

worker or the best idea wins out ... It's kind of rigged."

He thinks the situation will improve eventually.

"Russia has a tendency to bend towards the West, then bend back towards the East," Talbot says. "We just happen to be in one of those periods where they're turning away from the West."

Tim Douglas, former WWU dean of students and former Bellingham mayor, agrees. Douglas says he and Jim Talbot shared a belief that citizen diplomacy had played a significant role in bridging the divide between Russia and the U.S. during the Soviet era.

Douglas worked with Jim Talbot to establish Bellingham's sister city ties with Nakhodka—a relationship that survives today.

Douglas thinks the common interests of the U.S. West Coast and Russian Far East will eventually bring the two peoples back together.

He noted that Talbot cherished an unfulfilled dream of setting up an international conference center in his Barkley development in northeast Bellingham, on land he had once acquired as an industrial site. Douglas says that type of center would also be a natural for Bellingham's redeveloping waterfront, where the university hopes to have a strong presence. Environmental issues of mutual concern would be a logical focus for such a center.

Douglas, who also lived in Moscow for two years as country director for the Peace Corps, says the two countries have much to learn from each other.

"The current relationship between the two countries has slid so far back that it will take some effort to rekindle those possibilities, but I'd like to believe it can happen," Douglas says.

John Stark is a freelance writer in Bellingham.

Editors of the Species

We could eliminate malaria—and potentially many other diseases—with gene drives. Should we?

By John Thompson

Picture the African continent without its 214 million annual cases of malaria. Or South America devoid of the scourge of the new terror of the Zika virus. Or developing nations in the tropics not spending hard-won resources fighting dengue fever, an illness so painful that it's also known as "break-bone fever" because at its height it feels like your own bones are breaking inside your body.

Picture it happening because scientists could do it. Today.

Through an emerging scientific process called gene drives, scientists could alter the genetics of mosquitos to prevent them from passing along these diseases to the human population. Someday, scientists could use the technology we have now to alter humanity to make us all more cancer resistant, for example. But the gene drives—and the power they create—are so controversial and riddled with moral and ethical scientific dilemma that the world has collectively slow-tracked their use.

"Part of you thinks, 'What's not to like?' It's that important a breakthrough," says Western's Wayne Landis, a national expert on environmental risk assessment. "Then you start to think of the implications, of the potentialities, and it makes you take a step back and think about it a little more. Or a lot more."

Last year, Landis, a professor of Environmental Science in Western's Huxley College of the Environment and the director of the college's Institute for Environmental Toxicology, was asked to be a member on the National Academy of Sciences' 15-person panel convened to discuss the issues around the emerging scientific and ethical quandaries associated with using gene drives in non-human populations. Their report, "Gene Drives on the Horizon: Advancing Science, Navigating Uncertainty, and Aligning Research with Public Values," also includes initial recommendations for how the technology might best be used—or not.

WHAT IS A GENE DRIVE?

Gene drives are a system of biased inheritance that enhance the ability of a genetic element to pass from an organism to its offspring through sexual reproduction.

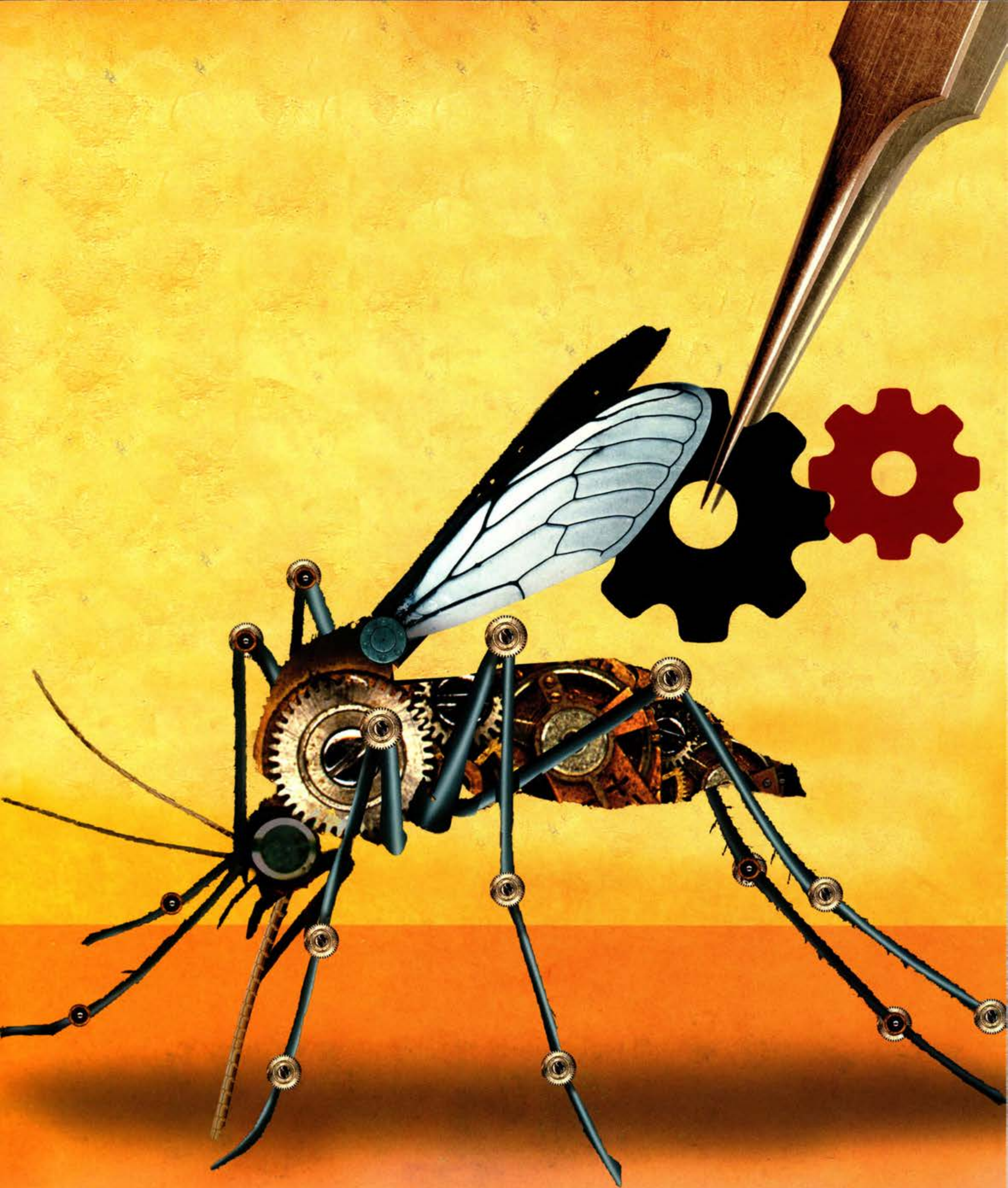
In other words, scientists "edit" the DNA of an organism so that it then passes on or "drives" a selected trait to its offspring. In nature, traits are passed on about 50 percent of the time. But a gene drive ensures a trait is passed on 100 percent of the time—in every generation that follows.

Using a pair of humans in a simplified example, assume a tall man with brown hair and brown eyes has a child with a short woman with blue eyes and blond hair; their resulting children would be a blend of those traits. But using gene drives, their offspring could be selected to have blue eyes every time. And not only would their children have blue eyes, but because the trait is passed to the next generation automatically and always selected, their children's children and so on down the line—every single one of their descendants—would always have blue eyes. This trait would continue in subsequent generations and grow more and more widespread, which is how a relatively small number of genetically engineered mosquitos unable to pass along malaria could quickly spread across the entire population, eradicating the disease in humans.

"That is gene drives in a nutshell," Landis says. "So much potential for benefit, so much potential for harm."

THE CRISPR BREAKTHROUGH

Geneticists have been studying gene drive systems for more than 50 years, but the true breakthrough occurred in 2013 with the advent of a DNA-cutting technology called CRISPR/Cas9. CRISPR—an acronym for Clustered Regularly-Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats—refers to segments of bacterial



Ellen Zocher, a senior Biology major from Bellevue, prepares a petri dish full of the roundworm *C. elegans* to be examined under a higher powered microscope. With the help of gene editing technology, Zocher and Assistant Professor of Biology Lina Dahlberg can explore "some really interesting fundamental questions about biology."



Photo by: Rhys Logan ('11)

DNA that, when paired with a specific guide protein, can be used to make “cuts” in an organism’s genome, removing and adding traits to its genetic sequence. The process is referred to as “cutting” as an analog to the days when movie editors would take a strip of film, cut and remove frames, and insert new ones to complete the final product; the same process is now happening in strands of DNA.

With the CRISPR technology in place, researchers completed limited cuts on the DNA of fruit flies, mosquitos and yeast. The success of these initial studies opened up both the wider potential and implications of gene-drives, not just in insects and plants but, of course, in humans as well.

The CRISPR/Cas 9 technology is already widely used in genetic research, said Western’s Lina Dahlberg, assistant professor of Biology.

“It’s a great tool, no question about it,” she said. “And it certainly allows us to do quite a few things we couldn’t do before.”

For example, Dahlberg’s research in cell biology and biochemistry chiefly focuses on experimentation with *C. elegans*, the roundworm.

“*C. elegans* breeds quickly and is easy to examine, and allows us to ask some really interesting fundamental questions about biology,” she says. “I can use CRISPR/Cas 9 to ask questions about one specific gene’s function in *C. elegans* in a lot of different ways. The answers to those questions inform us about our own systems, even though the roundworm is a creature made up of only about 1,000 cells.”

CONSIDER THE MOSQUITO

An ideal candidate for the use of gene drives remains the mosquito simply because of the staggering number of deadly afflictions the tiny insect passes on to humans across the world.

Hilary Schwandt, an assistant professor in Western’s Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies, researches reproductive health and infectious disease, and she says the eradication of malaria from Africa would have a staggeringly positive effect on public health issues there. Malaria kills nearly 500,000 people a year in Africa alone.

“Malaria in Africa is especially tragic for children and vulnerable populations such as pregnant women, and being able to prevent these countless premature deaths would be incredible,” says Schwandt, who earned her doctorate at Johns Hopkins University working down the hall from peers studying insect-borne infectious diseases.

“At the same time there is a natural reluctance in creating an organism that couldn’t exist in nature, and I understand that,” she says. “Weighing these negatives with the huge upside of public health is going to be a fascinating discussion.”

The ripples from the eradication of malaria alone would spread far beyond public health, as it has been estimated that

GENE EDITING AT WORK

Western’s Lina Dahlberg, assistant professor of Biology, uses gene-editing technology in her studies of a research realm known as “basic research,” where she uses model organisms (in her case, the roundworm *C. elegans*) to ask and answer fundamental questions that reflect how those systems work not just in that model system, but across the living world.

Using CRISPR/Cas 9 technology, she will be able to look at how removing a gene in a roundworm affects her model population – an experiment that would never be ethical to even try in a human.

“For example, if we disable the gene for glutamate receptors in the roundworm, which isn’t sentient and doesn’t ‘think’ in the strict sense, it just reacts to its surroundings, that is one thing. If we cut the same gene from a human, a lack of glutamate receptors would mean that person would be unable to form memories.”

She said she can figure out how genetic manipulation in a roundworm changes a certain protein, for example, and know that there is a corollary to that change in us, without ever having to use a human in research.

“I can ask questions using the worms that I could never ask—and should never be asked—in a human. And these questions inform us about human health and our interaction with the planet,” she says.



Lina Dahlberg, assistant professor of biology, uses gene editing technology to explore fundamental scientific concepts.

malaria costs African nations—some of the poorest on Earth—more than \$12 billion a year.

QUESTIONS OF RISK, REWARD, MORALITY

Landis says history is rife with examples of humanity's failed attempts to modify ecological systems. Take, for example, the introduction of the European rabbit to colonial Australia in the 1800s by a landowner who pined for the seemingly innocuous creatures.

Still an environmental mess Down Under, the mammals exploded in number with few predators and still eat millions of dollars' worth of local crops each year. This pales in comparison to gene drives and their potential for extreme success or horrific failure.

Any huge shift to an ecosystem, such as the alteration or even removal of billions of mosquitos all at once through what amounts to a genetic chain reaction—essentially a gene bomb—can't be entered into lightly, and this type of large-scale risk assessment is why Landis was asked to be on the NAS panel.

"There are morality issues involved in creating and releasing organisms into the wild that defy natural selection, whether it's a mosquito or a species of wheat," he says. "Also, who or what governs this science? Who regulates its use and evaluates its efficacy? As I said in the report, there isn't a single agency in this country today equipped to handle all of these questions."

What if a gene drive could make humans resistant to disease, such as by eliminating our ability to be infected by the AIDS virus? Conversely, what if a gene drive could be used to create new forms of bioweapons? Or more likely, how could this technology be rushed into use for commercial gain without proper vetting and research, with untoward consequences as a result?

"Genetic editing has been talked about since the discovery of genetics themselves," Landis says. "And of course the level of unease an average person feels about genetic changes made to mosquitos gets amplified a hundredfold when you talk about similar techniques being used on a human embryo."

In addition, the mere testing of the technology evokes fears of test subjects escaped into the wild, of mutations or errors in the process, of the philosophical issues surrounding the eradication of species and the hubris of humans altering Mother Nature's genetic plan.

Dahlberg says that using CRISPR/Cas 9 is not a process without error—that genetic information that is supposed to be placed into slot A in a genome can get placed into Slot B and/or C instead.

"Any organism that has been altered for release in the wild would need to have literally billions of nucleotides checked for these kinds of unforeseen errors, because they can happen," she says. "And while most 'off-target' mutations are fatal, my concern is that a rush to push something out the door to make

a product or complete a process for even a very good reason could have this sort of error if due diligence does not occur."

Lawyers, bioethicists, religious leaders, philosophers and public-health advocates, among others, have all recently weighed in on gene drives and the technology's impact; a healthy discussion on the Stanford Law School's Law and Biosciences blog talked about the positives and negatives of the NAS panel's report and summed it up by calling it a "useful start but nowhere near a finish."

"These kinds of questions and worries are why the panel was convened," says Landis. "And while we could never answer every question or solve every issue, we did get the ball rolling and the conversation started. It's going to take a long time for them all to be answered ... and some may never be."

Something to think about until spring, when we all start hearing, once again, the buzz of mosquitos in the Pacific Northwest.

John Thompson is Western's Assistant Director of Communications and Marketing. Years ago, while working for Delaware Fish & Wildlife, he was bitten by seemingly every mosquito on the East Coast.

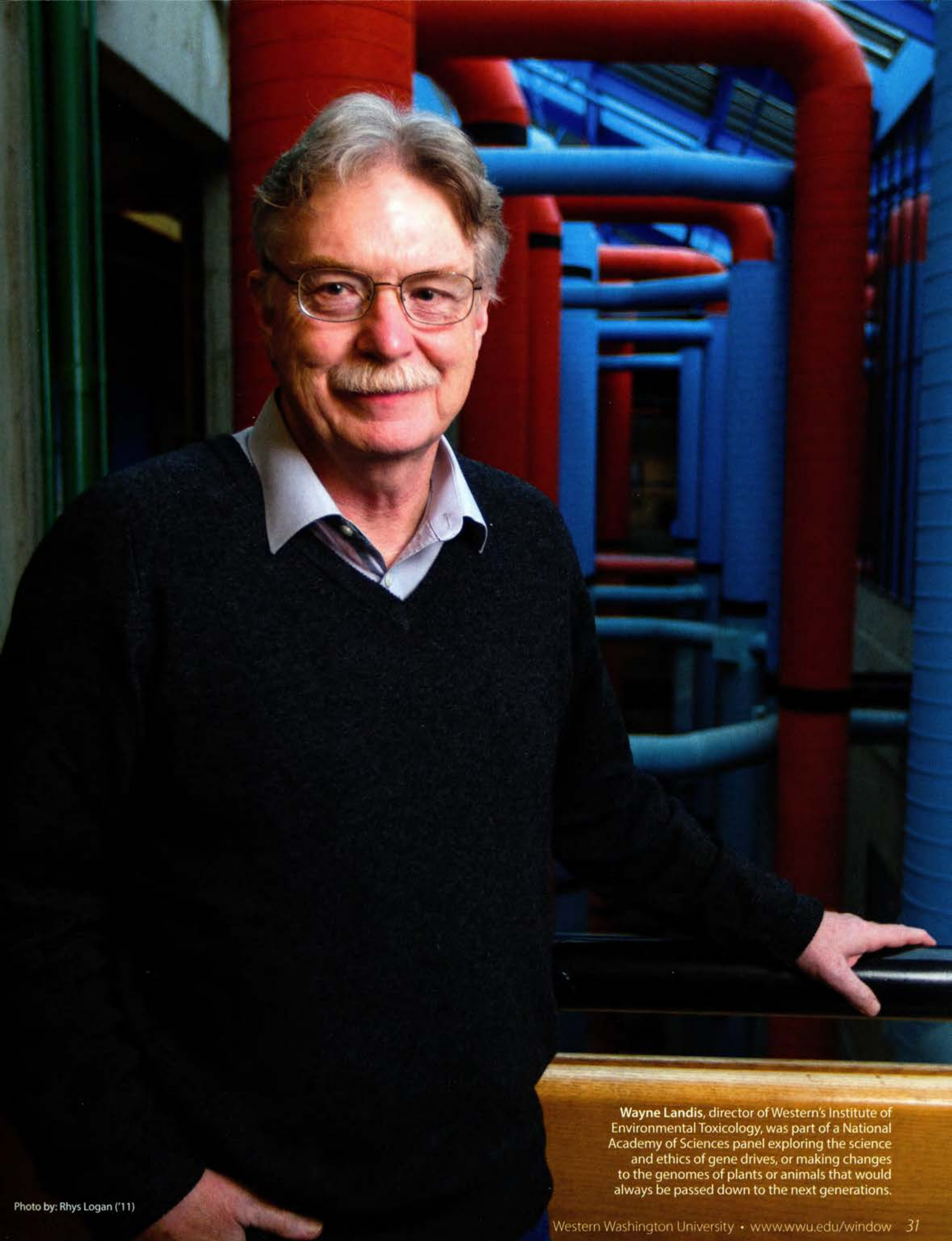
"There isn't a single agency in this country today equipped to handle all of these questions."

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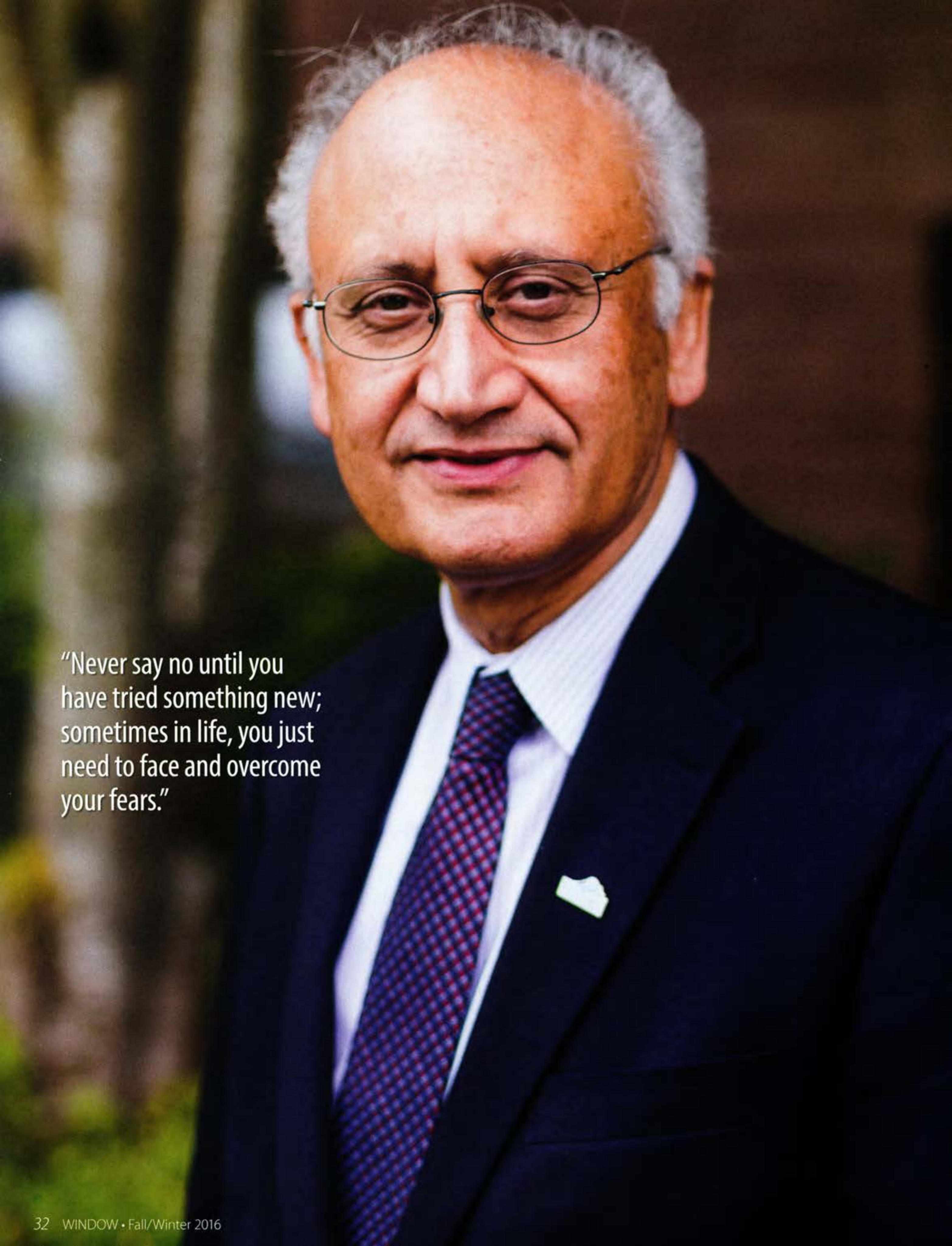
"Gene Drives on the Horizon: Advancing Science, Navigating Uncertainty, and Aligning Research with Public Values" is available for free download at nas-sites.org/gene-drives/.

"It has been one of the most intriguing and complex panels I've ever worked on, because of all the questions surrounding it, from the genetics side to the social science side," Landis says. "It's really been fascinating."

Other members of the NAS panel come from such institutions and organizations as Yale University, the University of California at Berkeley, Notre Dame University, the University of Edinburgh, Vanderbilt Medical Center, and the University of Maryland.



Wayne Landis, director of Western's Institute of Environmental Toxicology, was part of a National Academy of Sciences panel exploring the science and ethics of gene drives, or making changes to the genomes of plants or animals that would always be passed down to the next generations.

A portrait of an older man with white hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a patterned tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is blurred, showing trees and foliage.

"Never say no until you
have tried something new;
sometimes in life, you just
need to face and overcome
your fears."

DEVOTED TO CREATING 'OPPORTUNITY FOR OTHERS'

Sabah Randhawa, Western's new president, knows the power of higher education

By Paul Cocke

Sabah Randhawa understands the power of opportunity offered by higher education. He has lived it.

Western Washington University's 14th president was born in Lahore, the second-largest city of Pakistan, in 1954 to parents who had never attended college. But they understood the importance of education; despite financial struggles Randhawa says that his father likely used as much as half his salary as a pharmaceutical salesman to send both him and his sister to an excellent co-ed school run by the Church of England.

"I really admired his courage, that he made sure my sister received the same education as me," Randhawa says. "There weren't that many co-ed schools at that time, and a lot of social pressure about not sending girls to co-ed schools."

Randhawa went on to get his bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Engineering and Technology in Pakistan. That led to a job as an engineer with a British multinational company, which operated a chemical plant in rural Pakistan.

Randhawa says getting to his first job involved a crowded 200-mile bus trip that took six hours to stop in every tiny village along the way. During the summer, it was brutally hot.

The chemical plant, built in the 1930s next to a salt mine, produced sodium carbonate from salt, ammonia and chlorine, which was used in a range of products from steel to soap. Back then in Pakistan, there were few if any environmental regulations, and hot summer temperatures only increased the toxic gases around the plant. Randhawa soon noticed that management and engineers were housed at one end of the plant, with the shift workers housed at the other end where steady winds blew ammonia and chlorine fumes.

"That really stuck with me—I learned about unjust hierarchies in society," Randhawa says.



Soon after he arrived, there was a need for a factory shift leader and Randhawa found himself supervising 40 to 50 people during the day and as many as 200 workers during the night shift. Randhawa had to quickly develop effective ways to deal with a wide range of people and problems. Those early leadership challenges would serve him well throughout his career.

After two years at the plant, Randhawa had saved enough money for his long-held dream of studying overseas. He had developed an interest in systems engineering—which includes design and management of complex systems—and selected a graduate program in Industrial Engineering at Oregon State University in Corvallis.

He completed his master's degree in Industrial Engineering at OSU, followed by a doctorate in Industrial Engineering at Arizona State University. Randhawa's intent was to return to work in industry; he had no interest in education as a career field and had resisted entreaties to teach at Arizona State. That was until the third year of his doctoral program when the department head he admired was facing surgery and asked Randhawa to cover for him and teach one of his classes. "I just didn't have the heart to say no to him," Randhawa says.

To prepare for teaching a class for the first time ever, Randhawa practiced lecturing in empty classrooms, in part to overcome his anxiety and discomfort at speaking in front of a class. But the actual experience of teaching surprised Randhawa—he enjoyed it.

"That got me going in my teaching career," he says, adding that he learned from the experience to "never say no until you have tried something new; sometimes in life, you just need to face and overcome your fears."

That new willingness to try new things led Randhawa to a career in higher education at Oregon State University, including as professor; head of OSU's Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering; associate dean for Operations in the College of Engineering; interim dean of the College of Business; vice provost for Academic Affairs and International Programs and then, for 11 years, as OSU's provost and chief operating officer.

As provost, Randhawa was the second-ranking administrator at OSU, responsible for academic, research and many other facets of the large public research university with 30,000 students. While he was provost, overall OSU enrollment, including underrepresented minorities and international students, surged. OSU made significant investments in tenure-track faculty hiring; established an accredited public health program; developed OSU-Cascades, the university's branch campus in Bend; and the university's first comprehensive fund-raising initiative brought in over \$1 billion.

This summer, OSU President Edward J. Ray praised Randhawa for his contributions to the university: "Sabah blends skill and efficiency with fairness and personal compassion, and he's left a lasting mark on OSU."


"A family person"

While a faculty member at Arizona State University in 1986, Randhawa was introduced to his future wife, Uzma Ahmad, through their parents, who knew each other.

"We felt mutual attraction for each other, I think," says Randhawa.

That led to a long-distance courtship, Randhawa in Oregon and Ahmad in Pakistan.

(Top Left) Randhawa chats with student ambassador Stedman Knox of Bothell during a housewarming party at the Randhawas' new Bellingham home. Their own daughter, Tanya, will soon complete her undergraduate degree at Oregon State University. (Center) Randhawa tours the Carver Academic Facility, in the midst of a massive renovation, during one of his first meetings with the Board of Trustees. (Bottom) Randhawa speaks to faculty and staff at the Opening Convocation in September.



Randhawa and Ahmad have met hundreds of staff, faculty, alumni and donors since arriving in Bellingham Aug. 1.

Decades before the Internet and Skype, they used old-fashioned communications methods – the phone and letters.

“I still give Uzma a hard time that I would have bought a house earlier if I hadn’t been spending \$1,000 a month on phone bills calling her,” says Randhawa, laughing.

“I always tell him, you are smart if you invest in relationships,” Ahmad says. “Investing in relationships enriches life.”

Like Randhawa, Ahmad is highly educated, including master’s degrees in Psychology from Pakistan and in Counseling from Oregon State University. She has 25 years of experience working in mental health, specializing in building resilience in children and families. For instance, for several years, she directed the DHS Family Sexual Abuse Treatment Program in Albany, Oregon, planning treatment and training therapists to support abused children and their non-offending parents.

“Uzma is a lovely person—inside and out. Very caring, just deeply connects with people, and is genuinely interested in others,” Randhawa says.

Ahmad describes her husband as “a caring, family person who works very hard, and even though work is very important to him, I know that he is there for us.” She added that Randhawa is well-organized: “He manages his time very effectively.”

“I have a bad reputation at home,” Randhawa confesses. “If they can’t find something, they think that I must have organized it off someplace.”

They have a daughter, Tanya Randhawa, who will graduate in 2016 from Oregon State University in Digital Communications. Ahmad says that a close-knit family has been very important

to them. “In spite of our busy schedules,” she says, “we always managed to regularly have home-cooked dinners together as a family.”

They have tried to make sure Tanya learned important family values from them through the years. “We emphasized with her to be a good person at heart, to honor and respect other people, and the value of hard work, and to be honest with others and with oneself, which brings satisfaction to your core,” Ahmad says.

Both Randhawa and Ahmad value the richness and humility that comes from understanding different cultures, values and perspectives. They say that this has been important in their own personal lives and in Tanya’s development, including her participation in a study abroad program.

“Long before getting into administration, Uzma and I served as co-presidents of OSU’s Crossroads International Program,” Randhawa says. “We hosted a number of students from different countries as part of a home-stay program; those interactions were powerful learning experiences.”

An excellent university with enormous potential

The idea of educational opportunity has permeated Randhawa’s entire career; in fact that was one of Randhawa’s attributes that most impressed Western’s presidential search committee.

“As we considered Sabah for Western’s president, one quality stood out – his strong focus on student success, and his belief in the importance of higher education opening doors of opportunity to people from all walks of life,” says Sue Sharpe, chair of Western’s Board of Trustees and chair of the university’s search



Welcoming party: Randhawa and Ahmad greet students at the Paint Bellingham Blue event in downtown Bellingham the night before the first day of fall quarter in September. Everyone was invited to sign a banner hung outside the Herald Building.

committee.

While Western's campus community evaluated Randhawa, he and Ahmad were doing the same for Western, and they liked what they saw.

"Western is a place that really cares for students and that showed through and through," Randhawa says. "The right fit was really critical for us. Both Uzma and I felt this was a place we could call home."

Randhawa succeeds former President Bruce Shepard, who retired after eight years as WWU president. Since he started Aug. 1 there's been a steep learning curve, meeting with students, faculty, staff, alumni, the governor, legislators, and many more. Randhawa is listening and learning.

The new president says Western is an excellent university with enormous potential. At a packed Opening Convocation in September, Randhawa outlined some of his observations about Western and his hopes for the future. His talk touched on the importance of advancing inclusive excellence, supporting student success, closing the achievement gap for students from diverse and first-generation backgrounds, encouraging students' global knowledge for a rapidly changing world and serving the state and region through outreach and partnerships. The audience of faculty and staff responded to his remarks with a standing ovation.

A systems engineer by training, Randhawa enjoys "intentionally helping institutions and organizations evolve and grow" and he is encouraging a robust strategic planning process at Western to further reimagine and guide Western's continued transformation.

"Plans do not produce results. People do," Randhawa says. "It's all about having people who are supportive of the mission of the university and then caring about them and mentoring them

in their success."

As he begins his tenure as Western's next president, Randhawa is full of optimism about new emerging opportunities for the university.

"Western should be proud of where they have been. Excellence is a journey and to sustain and build on that requires continuous work and effort. We are either moving up or we are moving down, relative to the world around us," Randhawa says.

"What I am most excited about is trying to find out, on this 'excellence ladder,' what the next step for Western is," he says, "and how we get from where we are to that future point of our shared aspirations."

"I have learned that successful organizations, while being effective in the present, bring a focus to the future," he says. "Understanding that possibility gap and ensuring that Western is well positioned for the future will be a critical element of our strategic planning effort."

While he collaboratively works with the campus to position Western for the future, Randhawa's strong interest in providing bright futures for all students is evident in his leadership.

"I want the chance to create opportunities for others," Randhawa says, "as opportunities were created for me, by so many others."

Paul Cocke is Western's Director of Communications and Marketing.



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Class Notes

1961 – Marilyn L. Redmond (Music Education) recently published "Paradigm Busters, Reveal the Real You," which is available on Amazon.

1965 – Luana Graves (Special Education – K-12 Elementary, History – Secondary Ed.) was recently honored for 50 years of service to the American Association of University Women.

1967 – Anne Courtney Gardner (Special Education – K-12 Elementary, Mathematics – Secondary) a retired professor at Wenatchee Valley College, was recently awarded Professor Emeritus status by the board of trustees.

1969 – John Kole (Economics) recently retired from 45 years in the vehicle repair business, closing his shop in Bellingham.

1970 – The Warrenton-Hammond School Board near Astoria, Oregon, recently voted to name Warrenton High School's football field after **John Mattila** (Special Education – K-12, Physical Education – Secondary), a retired longtime

teacher who coached many football and basketball teams.

1971 – Vicki (Butchart) Tolan (Physical Education – Elementary) retired in May after 45 years in education. She taught at the elementary, middle and high school levels, but spent the last 27 years at Alta Loma Junior High School in California. Next, she plans to travel, work at Disneyland and run a half-marathon, 5K or 10K every month. **Bill Wood** (Biology; '73, Biology) is retired from the state Department of Fish and Wildlife and recently received a Golden Trowel award from the Washington State University Clallam County Master Gardner Program. Wood, a Master Gardner since 2001, has been instrumental in the work to re-establish an oak habitat on the Sequim Prairie.

1972 – Don Wick (Speech Communication) retired last year as executive director of the Economic Development Association of Skagit County. A member of Edmonds Community College's first class, Wick recently served as master of ceremonies for the college's 50th anniversary party.

1973 – Dean Kahn (Political Science) recently retired from the Bellingham Herald, where he had been a reporter, news editor, columnist and magazine editor. Before joining the Herald in 1986, Kahn also worked as a statehouse reporter for United Press International in Jefferson City, Missouri, and Olympia.

John Drinkwater (M.Ed., Student Personnel Administration) retired in 2010 as senior director of Campus Life and the Student Union at Central Washington University.

1974 – Kitty Banner (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration) was named an Alaska Aviation Legend by the Alaska Air Carriers Association for her many years as a bush pilot in the Talkeetna area.

1975 – James Hustad (Art) is a synthesizer artist and singer in Seattle and operates a synthesizer assembly company called Synthwerks.

1977 – Rich Benson (Recreation) is the Cascade Foothills area manager for Washington State Parks.

1979 – Brian Scott (M.Ed., Student/Faculty Designed) lives on Vancouver Island and has been an artist for more than 40 years and a teacher for

more than 20. He has also served on the British Columbia Arts Council.

1980 – Jim Sterk (Physical Education – Secondary Ed.) was recently appointed to be athletic director for the University of Missouri and was named one of four AD's of the Year by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics. Sterk was also just appointed to the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Committee. **Hoyt Gier** (Business Administration) was the 2016 recipient of Western's Lynda Goodrich Legacy Award. Gier, a former president of the Western Foundation board of directors who chaired the planning committee for the \$60 million Western Stands for Washington campaign, is a managing director and head of the Western Region-North for Citi Private Bank in San Francisco. **Mark Mitsui** (P.E.-Exercise and Sport Science, Psychology) became president of Portland Community College. Until recently, Mitsui was deputy assistant secretary for community colleges at the U.S. Department of Education.

1981 – Mark Fiege (History) was selected as the Wallace Stegner Endowed Chair in Western American



Schuyler Telleen (Humanities), left, has won two Emmys for his production design work on "Portlandia." He and his wife Kaitlyn McConnell ('03, Theatre), right, met when they were cast in a scene together in Western's Theatre Department.

Schuyler Telleen ('04)

Keeping 'Portlandia' weird

How did a degree in Humanities help your career as an art director?

I'm completely self-taught on the technical side, but I have such a wonderful knowledge now because of the critical thinking and drive to *want* to learn that I really got from Western. I often find myself mentoring people (who obtained film degrees) in critical thinking, because when you get a script, you have to expand the boundaries of your knowledge. You're living in a different time, a different socioeconomic landscape, you're letting go of a lot of the notions you were taught and the way you had to think growing up. And if you don't possess the skills for critical thinking and expanding your mind to say, 'How did this person come to this place?' you will lack the ability to tell a narrative story in any visual way, whether you have technical skills or not.

You need to figure out how to create as much enthusiasm and energy as possible and let your mind go at all times. A lot of people don't know this, but I dabbled in so many things at Western. I've talked to producers, directors and people as I travel and the thing I discovered most people look for in a candidate in my position or any business is enthusiasm, enthusiasm, enthusiasm. You have to have the motivation to want to learn. If you want to be somewhere, you're a valuable asset.

Studies at Montana State University. Fiege, an environmental historian of the American West, was an award-winning professor at Colorado State University, where he co-founded the university's Public Lands History Center. **Michael W. Stewart** (Sociology) was appointed to the state of Hawaii's Oahu Service Area Board on Mental Health and Substance Abuse.

1982 – John Mansfield (Political Science) was recently named vice president of Strategic Development for CTC Global, an Irvine, California, company that manufactures high-capacity ACCC overhead powerlines. **Roberta Riley** (Environmental Science – Social Assessment and Policy) manages the Climate Adventures Program for CoolMom, a nonprofit in Seattle that encourages families to take action on climate change. She recently shared stories of people around the state who are feeling the effects of climate change – and coming up with solutions – for the Huxley College of the Environment Speaker Series. **Stephen Glueckert** (M.Ed., Art) recently retired as senior curator for the Missoula Art Museum, which recently featured his art in an exhibit, "All Mixed Up." The exhibit will also be shown at the Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings, the Nicolaysen Art Museum in Casper, Wyoming, and the Pritchard Art Gallery at the University of Idaho-Moscow.

1983 – Clark Potter (Music – Performance, History & Literature) is associate professor of viola at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, principal viola of the Lincoln Symphony and conductor of the Lincoln Youth Symphony.

1984 – Joan Penney (Master of Music) is a retired community college administrator and a jazz vocalist who performs throughout the northwest with the Joan Penney Jazz Quartet.

1985 – Tara Kaiyala Weaver (Human Services) lives in Blaine and is a musician, conductor and music teacher. She teaches violin and viola and coaches chamber groups.

1986 – Paul Pitre (Broadcast Communication) was named chancellor of Washington State University North Puget Sound at Everett, where he's served as dean since 2014. **Michael Kugler** (M.A., History) is a history professor at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, and recently published a chapter in the book "Discworld and Philosophy," which explores themes in the late fantasy author Terry Pratchett's

41-book Discworld series. Kugler's chapter, "We Willna be Fooled Again! Wee Free Anarchists" draws inspiration from Pratchett's novel "Wee Free Men" and re-imagines them as anarchists.

1987 – Kristi Gruett (Fashion Marketing), a financial planning specialist at the Morgan Stanley Bellingham office, attained Morgan Stanley's Family Wealth Advisor designation. Gruett has been in the financial services industry for 21 years. **Becky Petersen** (Communications) is acquisition project manager for King County's Water and Land Resources Division. She recently spoke on campus for the Huxley College of the Environment Speaker Series. Former Olympia mayor and city council member **Doug Mah** (Sociology - Criminology; '89, M.A., Sociology) owns Doug Mah & Associates, a management and public affairs consulting business in Olympia.

1989 – Scott Hugill (Political Science) became city manager for Mountlake Terrace. **Michael S. Hamilton** (MBA) is a senior vice president, portfolio manager for Nuveen Investments, an operating division of TIAA Global Asset Management.

1990 – Dick Freier (Political Science) was named the football coach for Anacortes High School.

1991 – Ron Podmore (Geography) was named the 2016 Distinguished Alumnus of Centralia College and spoke at commencement in June. Podmore, a professor at Bellevue College and a teacher in Federal Way Public Schools, was the first deaf American to achieve National Board Professional Teacher Standards certification, in 2009. **Kerry Byford** (Manufacturing Engineering Technology) is co-owner of Irongate Machine Inc. in Bellingham.

1992 – Kelly Portmann (Human Development – Elementary Ed.), who has taught at Rainier Middle School for more than 20 years, was recently named a Teacher of the Year in the Auburn School District. **Brian Wharton** (M.Ed., Secondary Education) became the superintendent of the Yelm School District. Previously, he was principal of Yelm High School.

1993 – Rob Manahan (M.Ed., School Administration) recently became the superintendent of Peninsula School District in Gig Harbor. Previously, he was the superintendent of the Lake Chelan School District. **Paul Gregg** (Art) is a mixed-media artist whose work was recently exhibited at Kolva-Sullivan Gallery in Spokane.

1994 – Tinnell L. Priddy (Mathematics – Elementary; '99, M.Ed., Elementary; '10, Administrator Certificate – Principal) recently became the principal of Academies of Loudoun, an advanced technology academy under construction in Leesburg, Virginia. **Todd Mera** (Biochemistry) owns AniChe Cellars winery in the Columbia River Gorge with his wife, Rachael Mera. **Dave Bennink** (Environmental Science), owner of Re-Use Consulting, which helps building owners find sustainable alternatives to demolition, recently spoke about sustainable business practices at the Huxley College of the Environment Speaker Series. **Noel Franklin** (Art) won a Grants for Artists Projects Award from the Artist Trust for her work on her graphic memoir, "Girl on the Road."

1994 – Rebecca Himschoot (Student/Faculty Designed Major) teaches science at Keet Gooshee Elementary School in Sitka, Alaska, but is spending the year at the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C. as a U.S. Department of Energy Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow. She also was recently appointed to the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development. **Bryce Kisker** (Finance) became a Client Engagement director for WunderLand Group, a staffing agency specializing in the digital, creative and marketing industries.

1995 – Lance Fisher (English; '99, M.A., English; '09, Teaching Certificate) teaches English at Mount Vernon High School and was recently named Teacher of the Year by a nearby Rotary Club. **Andrea Duffield** (M.A., Speech Pathology/Audiology) is the president and CEO of MOSAIC Rehabilitation, Inc., four children's therapy clinics in Seattle, Bellevue and Issaquah. She recently received the Nellie Cashman Award for Business Owner of the Year from Women Business Owners of Puget Sound.

1996 – Stephen Bell (M.A., History), the president and attending physician at Newport Internal Medicine and the executive director of the Wayne County Osteopathic Medical Association, was recently named to Michigan's new Prescription Drug and Opioid Abuse Commission. **Justin Neal's** (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration) play, "So Damn Proud" received a staged reading at the Seattle Repertory Theater with Northwest Playwrights Alliance on Indigenous Peoples Day in October. **Christopher Morrison** (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary

Concentration) was named athletic director of St. Pius X – St. Matthias Academy in Downey, California.

1997 – Attorney Gabe Galanda (English) was named by Indian Country Today Media Network as one of the 50 Faces of Indian Country. **Sam Cushman** (Environmental Science) is a research landscape ecologist with the U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station and director of the Center for Landscape Science. He recently returned to Western to speak about landscape genetics for the Huxley College of the Environment Speaker Series. **Dean T. Peterson** (Business Administration) was promoted to vice president, relationship manager, at Puget Sound Bank. **Jennifer Kutcher** (Finance) is the CEO of Whatcom Educational Credit Union and was recently a speaker for Western's College of Business and Economics' Strategic Management Executive Speaker Series.

1998 – Susan Darrington (Human Services) is the vice president and general manager of Rogers Place, the Edmonton Oilers' brand-new hockey arena. Previously, she managed the Allianz Parque soccer stadium in São Paulo, Brazil, and was vice president of Facility Operation and Services at CenturyLink Field in Seattle. **Bryan Champ** (Communication) is the research manager for The Oregonian/OregonLive.com in Portland, Oregon. **Jennifer Louie Trainum** (Music – Performance) was a guest conductor for the Tuscaloosa Symphony Orchestra in Alabama during the city's annual Independence Day celebration. **Travis Smith** (English – Writing) was selected to be principal of Ramapo High School in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey.

1999 – Darren Orange (Art) is a mixed-media artist in Astoria, Oregon, and uses nontraditional materials like tar, house paint and concrete in his work. **Vince Nappo** (Theatre) is an actor who has appeared on television in "NCIS," "Castle," "Red Widow," "Reign," and "The Last Tycoon" and in the film "Friends with Kids." He also played Sam Phillips in the national tour of the Tony award-winning musical "Million Dollar Quartet." **Chris Sullivan** (Accounting) became the managing partner at VSH Certified Public Accountants in Bellingham. **Mike Kruger** (History – Secondary Education) became director of Communications for the Smart Electric Power Alliance. Previously, he was deputy director of Public Affairs for the U.S. Department of Commerce.

2000 – Donovan Grose (Linguistics, Psychology) is a professor of English at the Hang Seng Management College in Hong Kong, where he helped establish the English Department and major. **Caroline Brooks** (Art) was appointed executive director of the Roswell Museum and Art Center in New Mexico. Previously, she was gallery director for the Salem Art Association in Oregon.

2001 – Brett Mitchell (Music – Composition) was selected as the next music director of the Colorado Symphony. **Bill Lierman** (Economics) recently became co-chief investment officer for Alaska Permanent Capital Management Co. He also serves on the board of directors for the Chugiak-Eagle River Foundation. **Matt Parker** (Economics/Environmental Studies) is a real estate broker in Seattle who has written a series of books about the real estate business, including "Real Estate Smart: The New Home Buying Guide." **Chris Griffin** (Physical Education & Health K-12) is an assistant golf professional at Tacoma Country and Golf Club in Lakewood.

2002 – Emily Pieracci (History, Psychology) is a veterinary epidemiologist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and has done a lot of work in Africa, including responding to the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone. **Audrey Wooding** (M.S., Mathematics) is a market and economic research specialist for TechLink at Montana State University and recently became a director of the Bank of Bozeman. **Tony Luciano** (Environmental Science) and **Jack Pflueger** ('05, Industrial Design) recently launched Stones Throw Brewery in Bellingham's Fairhaven neighborhood.

Send us your Class Notes

Got a promotion? Got married? Published your novel? Made a difference in your community? Share your news with other alumni in Class Notes. We collect information from published accounts, press releases and alumni themselves. Notes are edited for style, clarity and length and are published as space allows. For more information, or to submit your own information for Class Notes, email Mary.Gallagher@wwu.edu.

2003 – Jessie Anderson (Accounting) recently opened the Kickin' A Saloon and Dance Hall in Ferndale, which includes a bar, restaurant, live music, dancing and country dance lessons. **Jillian Boyle** (Business Administration – Finance) became a treasury management specialist at Washington Federal. **Kristi Krieg** (Interdisciplinary Child Development) became principal of Tonasket Middle School in Eastern Washington. **Adam Ü** (Geography) is a professional skier and marine biologist who often collaborates with photographer **Grant Gunderson** ('05, Plastics Engineering Technology) on legendary back-country skiing photos, including 30 magazine covers worldwide. **Adam Roselli** (Business Administration – Management, Spanish) is a real estate broker in Vancouver, Washington, active with his local Rotary Club and the recipient of the 2016 Notable Alumni Award from Washington State University Vancouver, where he earned his MBA in 2010.

2004 – Christopher Ross (Financial Economics) became a director at Holliday Fenoglio Fowler, L.P., a commercial real estate firm.

2005 – Alanna Imbach (Spanish, Political Science) is a media relations manager and "storyteller-in-chief" for WaterAid, a nonprofit based in New York City dedicated to international development of clean water and toilets.

2006 – Alisa Louie (Interdisciplinary Child Development – Elementary Ed.), an ELL teacher at Evergreen Heights Elementary School in Auburn and a member of the Washington State Teacher Leader cadre, was recently named Regional Teacher of the Year by the Puget Sound Educational Service District. **Allyson Cundiff** (General Science – Elementary; '16, M.Ed., Educational Administration) was recently appointed assistant principal of Helen Haller Elementary School in Sequim. **Elsa Hiltner** (Theatre) is a costume designer based in Chicago who recently co-created "The Mars Assignment," a play with the Collaboraction Theatre Co. that explores depression in a realistic, non-stigmatizing way. **Jodi Minion** (Environmental Policy) is in South Dakota teaching high school science in the Pine Ridge Reservation. One of five Western alumni in the 2016 Teach for America Corps, Minion previously worked as a wildlife biologist for PETA.

2007 – Mountaineers Books recently published the memoir of

Leif Whittaker (English – Creative Writing), "My Old Man and The Mountain," with two generations' worth of mountain-climbing stories. Whittaker's father, Jim Whittaker, was the first American to summit Mount Everest. **Ethan Kanning** (Business Administration – International Business) became a commercial real estate sales person with NAI Business Properties in Billings, Montana. **Mike Miller** (Theatre) became the pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Lebanon, Oregon. **Andrew Hunter** (Communication) became a corporate real estate adviser with SVN/Raven in the Puget Sound area.

2008 – Ryan Johns (Accounting; '10, Master of Professional Accounting) became a tax manager at Altman, Rogers & Co. CPAs in Alaska. **Sarah Peterson** (M.S. Biology) recently completed her doctoral degree at the University of California, Santa Cruz and is now a wildlife biologist for the US Geological Survey. **Christine Hinojosa** (History/Social Studies; '14, M.Ed., Educational Administration) became interim principal at Arlington High School.

2009 – Dan Merz (Music) recently completed a Master of Divinity degree from Concordia Seminary St. Louis in Missouri. He and his wife, **Deanna Merz** ('11, Music Performance, Music Education), recently moved to Stanhope, New Jersey where Dan is the pastor of the Lutheran Church of Our Savior.

2010 – Mariah Ottersen (Geology) is a ground penetrating radar analyst with Penhall Technologies. She recently worked with the White River Valley Museum to survey and locate existing gravesites at a 156-year-old Japanese-American/Buddhist cemetery in Auburn. **Sasha Barcheski** (Accounting; '11, MBA) was promoted to audit manager at Altman, Rogers & Co. CPAs in Alaska. **Jon Atkins** (Kinesiology) became the football coach at Coupeville High School. **Samantha Cooper** (Theatre, English Literature) received her MFA in Playwriting from Columbia University in May. And her short play, "The Woman American," was a Final 30 finalist in the Samuel French Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival over the summer. **Tara Giddens** (Creative Writing) recently completed her master's degree in Irish Literature and Culture at Maynooth University in Ireland and was awarded a teaching fellowship at the University of Limerick where she is working toward her doctoral degree in English.

2011 – Ty Minton-Small (English – Literature) was the cinematographer and lead assistant editor for

"Gleason," a documentary about former NFL player Steve Gleason coping with ALS with his family. **Monika Gruszecki** (English Literature, German) came in 22nd in the javelin at the U.S. Olympic Track and Field trials. **Lindsey Evans** (Recreation) became a program manager for Trekkers, an outdoor-based youth mentoring organization on the midcoast of Maine. Evans previously worked with Trekkers as an AmeriCorps volunteer.

2012 – Keturah Witter (Mathematics, Environmental Science) is a scientist with the global environmental and sustainability consultancy Environmental Resources Management. She recently spoke to students about environmental consulting for the Huxley College of the Environment Speaker Series. **Colin Poff** (Political Science) recently completed his master's in Urban Planning at the University of Washington and became a land use planner with AHBL in Seattle.

2013 – Kayla Edwards (Anthropology – Biocultural) became a kindergarten teacher at Columbia Heights Elementary School in Longview. **Hillary Susz** (Creative Writing) is a songwriter and guitarist in Boulder, Colorado, where she is in graduate school at the University of Colorado Boulder. **Valeria Fisher** (German, Sociology) is a graduate student in Consumer Affairs at the Technical University of Munich in Germany where she received a DAAD Graduate Scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service.

2014 – Emma Burgson (Environmental Science) and friend Paige Norman came in fourth in the grueling 2016 Yukon 1,000 Canoe and Kayak Race in July. The canoeists, childhood friends, raced under the name "Minnesota Gneiss" through 1,000 miles of Alaska and Yukon wilderness. Pianist **Madeline Slettedahl** (Music Performance) was a 2016 winner of the Music Academy of the West's 2016 Marilyn Horne Song Competition, winning a \$4,000 prize and a recital tour. **Paul Burke** (Marketing) is the CEO and co-founder of RentHoop, an app that helps users find roommates by "swiping" right or left. **Jesselyn Krolicki** (Recreation) is a case manager working with homeless youth at Northwest Youth Services' PAD house in Bellingham.

2015 – Danny Miller (Visual Journalism) became a staff photographer for the Daily Astorian newspaper in Oregon. **Taylor Capps** (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary

Concentration) recently opened the Capps Club music venue in Kenmore with his parents. **Stefanie Donahue** (Journalism) became the editor of *The Northern Light*, a weekly newspaper in Blaine. **Bethany Drake** (Art) finished 14th in the women's javelin at the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials. **Thayne Yazzie** (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration) won a \$10,000 scholarship from the crowd-funding site GoFundMe for his work toward flight certification at Eastern New Mexico University with plans to obtain Medivac certification to serve the Navajo Nation. **Ruthie Jablonsky** (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration, Spanish) is based in Spokane and plays old-time fiddle music in the band Dry and Dusty with her sister Sally.

2016 – Ari Blatt (Environmental Science – Marine Ecology) became an AmeriCorps member with the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association in Bellingham. **Katie Reichert** (Design, Communication Studies) came in 16th in the javelin at the U.S. Olympic Trials in Eugene. **Micah Stumme-Diers** (Biochemistry) is a graduate research associate at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Pharmacy in Omaha. **Kate Welch** (Geography) is an AmeriCorps VISTA member with MAPS Media Institute in Hamilton, Montana, developing an after-school service-learning program that incorporates technology and the arts. This year's Teach for America recruits include five Western alumni, including **Jessica Stein** (Sociology) in Orlando, Florida, **Heather Heffelmire** (Political Science) in Baltimore, **Benjamin Ratcliff** (Behavioral Neuroscience) in Miami, and **Kara Johnson** (Human Services) in Alabama. **Sean Petersmark** (Business and Sustainability) spent the summer bicycling nearly 5,000 miles across the country, stopping to help build and raise awareness for affordable housing along the way, with Bike & Build. **Keely Hausken** (Biology/Anthropology) is taking a year before attending graduate school in physical therapy and serving as the diving coach for West Valley High School in Yakima and working as an administrative assistant at Mountain View Home Health.

Marriages

Kristi Lentz ('00, Communication – Elementary Ed.) and Ryan Taylor on Dec. 27, 2015, in Stanwood.

Matthew Tynan ('08, History, Political Science) and **Kelsey Williams** ('12, Political Science/Social Studies) on Sept. 4, 2016, in Bellingham.

Obituaries

1934 – Carol S. Radke, 94, a long-time member of the Bellingham School Board, on Sept. 20, 2016, in Bellingham. Memorial donations: "Radke Family Faculty Award" at the Western Foundation.

1937 – Ruth Kleven, 104, a retired teacher and community volunteer, on Aug. 27, 2016.

1941 – Virginia Boal Hayden, 98, who with her husband owned several grocery stores in the Bellingham area, on Sept. 26, 2016, in Bellingham.

1942 – Helen M. Anderson, 92, a retired teacher and owner of an estate sale business, on May 28, 2016.

1944 – Myrtle Jean Woodcock Little, 93, a retired teacher in Eureka, California, on June 19, 2016.

1946 – Kenneth Husfloen, 96, a longtime teacher, principal and administrator, on May 11, 2016, in Tacoma.

1947 – Betty R. Mayerbock, 90, of Chicago, on June 20, 2015.

1949 – Robert Hulbert, 86, a retired insurance agent, on June 10, 2016.

1950 – Charles Philip Houghlum, 89, a retired teacher, musician and church choir director, on Aug. 13, 2016, in Battle Ground. **Erwin Knapp**, 89, a retired teacher in Anacortes, on Sept. 30, 2016. **Russell L. McClintick**, 89, a retired teacher and community volunteer, on Aug. 13, 2016, in Kirkland.

1952 – Duane Anderson, 86, an audiologist, community volunteer and 2015 recipient of the Western Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award, on Sept. 23, 2016 in Oregon. Memorial Donations: WWU Alumni Memorial Scholarship Fund. **Barbara Lee Post**, 85, on May 25, 2016, in Anacortes. **Suzanne J. Stuehm**, 87, a retired teacher, on Sept. 11, 2016, in Tacoma.

1953 – John Page Dickson, 97, a retired Christian school teacher, principal and board member, on June 27, 2016.

1954 – Meech Houghton, 83, retired from The Boeing Co., on May 30, 2016. **Floyd Lunsford**, 90, a retired elementary school teacher and principal on Fidalgo Island and former Anacortes City Council member, on Oct. 23, 2016. **Larry Offutt**, 86, a retired teacher, school sports referee and minor league baseball umpire, on Feb. 12, 2016.

1955 – Marilyn Ann Hash, 82, a retired teacher, on May 14, 2016, in Enumclaw.

Tell us a good Viking love story

Share your wedding announcement in Window

If you recently got married or entered into a domestic partnership, share your news with your fellow alumni in "Marriages and Unions."

Email your news, including your names, class years, and the date and place of your marriage or union to Mary.Gallagher@wwu.edu

1956 – Rhoda Fickel, 83, a retired teacher, on Sept. 24, 2016, in Burlington. **Harry Bjarne Stakkestad**, 85, a retired teacher, on Sept. 25, 2016.

1957 – E. Dean Dingerson, 82, a retired teacher, on Sept. 19, 2016. **Donald Odin Isaacson**, 85, a retired high school science teacher and coach, on June 18, 2016.

1958 – Edward Mark Barcott, 88, a retired teacher in Port Townsend, on June 26, 2016. **Clifford Michael "Mick" McLean**, 82, a retired teacher and attorney, on June 6, 2016, in Longview.

1959 – Leslie June Larson, 79, a retired teacher and community volunteer, on Sept. 5, 2016. **Don C. Marley**, 86, a retired teacher and principal, on April 25, 2016, in Bellingham. **Betty Ann Saterstrom**, 79, a retired teacher who worked in home building and inspection, on Sept. 3, 2016. **Robert W. Saxvik**, 86, a former three-term Idaho State Senator who later served as chief of staff to Idaho Gov. John V. Evans, on Oct. 18, 2016, in Portland, Oregon.

1960 – Pauline B. Dudley, 97, a retired teacher, on May 4, 2016. **Richard Bert Hansen**, 85, a retired teacher, school administrator and coach in Alaska, on June 20, 2016, in Palm Springs, California. **Boyd Ivan Kiel**, a retired teacher and part-time customs officer, on May 26, 2016, in Ferndale.

1961 – Nancy Lee Antak, 77, a retired teacher, on April 4, 2016. **Ned Arthur Olson**, 78, a retired teacher at the Washington State School for the Blind, on July 30, 2016, in Vancouver, Washington.

1962 – Clara Salzgaber Olsen, 90, a retired homemaker who lived in Bellingham, on Oct. 11, 2016. **Dianne H. Woody**, a retired business owner, social worker, administrator for DSHS and Washington state senator for the 39th District of Snohomish and King counties from

1977 to 1985, on July 2016.

1963 – Bruce Harold Cleasby, 79, a retired shipyard worker, on May 22, 2016, in Bellingham. **David W. Corliss**, 75, a retired teacher in Libya, Turkey, Sicily, England and Okinawa who was later an active volunteer in Shelton, on July 10, 2016. **Wilhelma "Willie" M. Cowin**, a retired teacher in Ferndale, on May 21, 2016, in Lynden.

1964 – Donald E. Wilson, 85, a retired high school math teacher, on July 8, 2016.

1965 – Marian Marie Burger, 91, a retired teacher, on Oct. 5, 2016. **Connie Keil**, who owned and operated a grocery store in Stayton, Oregon, for 31 years with her husband, on April 30, 2016. **Helen Elizabeth Taylor**, 100, a retired teacher, on June 29, 2016.

1966 – James Burns, 91, a retired teacher at Lynden High School, on Sept. 7, 2016. **Larry Wayne DeKay**, 72, who worked in engineering at Boeing and was active with the Samish Indian Nation, on May 7, 2016, in Bothell. **William C. Meyer**, 79, a retired math teacher and longtime Bellingham resident, on Sept. 22, 2016. **George A. "Finn" Nikula**, 73, a retired teacher and coach, on June 17, 2016, while on a Baltic cruise. **John E. Oliver**, 75, a retired teacher, principal in North Thurston Public Schools, on June 23, 2016, in Olympia. **Jerry Roger Shipman**, 73, a mathematician and retired dean of the School of Arts and Sciences of Alabama A & M University, on July 16, 2016. **Laura Zalesky**, 92, a longtime second-grade teacher at Silver Lake Elementary School in Everett who helped advocate for the creation of North Cascades National Park, on May 18, 2016.

1967 – David Stanley Brecht, 72, who worked at the Boeing Co. for more than 20 years, on June 20, 2016, in Burien. **James H. Dumont**, 73, a retired real estate agent, on May 19, 2016, in Prince George, B.C.



Alanna Imbach (Political Science), the media relations manager for WaterAid, traveled to Nepal with journalists who were reporting on the state of water and sanitation access one year after the devastating 2015 earthquakes. The group received bindis and flowers at a welcoming ceremony in the village of Kharelthok in central Nepal.

Alanna Imbach ('05)

International clean water advocate

What has surprised you the most about international clean water and hygiene issues?

If someone would have told me 11 years ago (when I graduated from Western) that I'd wind up working in the 'WASH' sector—water, sanitation and hygiene—I would have laughed. I knew nothing about water, and cared even less about toilets or hygiene.

But my career led me to a position at the United Nations World Food Programme, where I had a real 'ah-ha' moment. Here we were delivering all of this food assistance to refugees and people suffering from a lack of nutritious food, and yet—without clean water and a basic things like soap, the food just goes straight through you. People continue to suffer from diarrheal disease and undernutrition. That's when I really started to understand how essential clean water is to eradicating extreme poverty. It's not just about the water. It's about health, education, jobs, women's empowerment, nutrition, the environment and so much more.

What's surprised me the most is realizing that the global water and sanitation crisis is a women's issue. More than anyone else, women and girls are the ones who lose out on the chance to attend school, pursue paid work or care for their families because they're out collecting water. Women and girls are the ones who care for their family members when they get sick from contaminated water; and women and girls are the ones who are harassed and even raped when looking for a private place to 'go'. Realizing that we have the tools and resources to change this is incredibly motivating.

1968 – Roland Louis Miller, 75, who worked in the tugboat and maritime industries for more than 30 years, on Jan. 7, 2016. **Lillian M. Richards**, 92, a retired elementary school teacher and community volunteer, on April 11, 2016, in Concord, New Hampshire. **Marion Sjoboen**, 80, of Concrete, on Oct. 21, 2016, in Anacortes. **Janine Gaye Thompson**, 70, on Sept. 23, 2016. **Michael A. Wallace**, 74, who established Hinzerling Winery and taught wine-making at Yakima Valley College, on Sept. 23, 2016, in Richland.

1969 – Larry Oster, 71, retired facilities manager for Clark Public Utilities, on Oct. 18, 2016.

1970 – Charlene Loree Guidinger, 68, a retired teacher in Skagit County, on Oct. 1, 2016.

1971 – Daniel Joseph Peck, 67, a retired director for utility companies in New Mexico, on June 24, 2016. **Michael M. Smith**, 71, retired director of Trident Seafoods' Southeast Asia Quingdao Operations, on Oct. 17, 2016, in Bellingham.

1972 – Sheila Bender, 67, a teacher in Seattle and Kansas City, Missouri, on July 8, 2016, in Kansas City. **Harriett C. Davis**, 92, a resident of Mount Vernon, on May 9, 2016. **Edward William Fournier**, 67, a retired nursing instructor at Bellingham Technical College, on July 1, 2016, in Bellingham. **Karl Frederick Holzmüller**, 70, a retired mental health counselor and school counselor, on Sept. 13, 2016, in Anacortes.

1973 – Richard Travis, 65, on Sept. 25, 2016.

1974 – Dennis Firebaugh, 71, a retired history and political science teacher, on June 12, 2016. **Jennifer Franza**, 64, a homemaker, on July 12, 2016, in Wenatchee. **Susan Helen Jamps**, 67, a retired school counselor in Bellingham, on Aug. 28, 2016. **Philip Lee Konkell**, 71, a retired French and Spanish teacher at Franklin High School in Seattle, church organist and community volunteer who drove cancer patients to treatment, on May 31, 2016.

1975 – Carole A. "Brownie" Brown, 65, who worked for the Bureau of Reclamation in the Southwest, on Aug. 26, 2016, in Yuma, Arizona. **William "Charlie" Sutton**, 66, on April 9, 2016, in Bellingham.

1976 – Steve Claude Aubert, 67, a retired pharmacist in Bellingham, on June 16, 2016. **Bruce Lolen Hayes**, 62, who managed bookstores and worked in medical billing, on Sept. 25, 2016.

1977 – Barbara Keller, 60, a photographer, on April 2, 2016. **Rosalie Van Deman Hansen**, 90, a retired nurse, on June 27, 2016. **Annabel Rose (Oversby) Rondeau**, a teacher in Wisconsin and Alaska, 62, on Oct. 7, 2016.

1978 – Rolland William Holterman, 73, a longtime teacher and wrestling coach at Mount Baker High School in Deming, on July 15, 2016, in Lynden. **Donald Edward Mathews**, 68, a retired history teacher, on April 9, 2016, in Grangeville, Idaho. **James Richard McCracken**, 64, founder and CEO of the Design Knowledge Co. in Dayton, Ohio, on July 9, 2016. **David Joel Van Meer**, 65, a former museum curator, librarian, writer and voice actor in the Mount Vernon area, on April 15, 2016.

1979 – Terry Belcoe, 60, president and CEO of North Coast Credit Union and active community volunteer, on Sept. 23, 2016. **Colleen Brummitt Riggs**, 61, on July 5, 2016, in Pacific Beach.

1981 – Jane Helen Fleischbein, 62, a retired oceanographer and faculty

research assistant at the School of Oceanography at Oregon State University who also worked as a second-grade teacher, public health nurse, commercial fisher and Benton County Planning Commissioner, on April 5, 2016. **Shelley Muzzy**, 68, on Oct. 23, 2016.

1982 – Kimberly Ann Williams, 56, a social worker in Washington and Alaska, on May 26, 2016, in Juneau, Alaska.

1983 – Frank Nickerson, 56, a longtime teacher and coach at Kamiak High School in Mukilteo, on July 7, 2016, in Lake Stevens.

1986 – Nancy Brown Toland, 53, on May 21, 2016.

1988 – Steve Peschek, 55, a reimbursement manager for PeaceHealth, on Oct. 19, 2016, in Bellingham.

1992 – Ethel L. Clarke, 75, a retired teacher, high school administrator and professor at University of Washington and Western, on June 13, 2016. **Theriece Jean "Teri" Sawyer**, 69, a longtime instructional

assistant and teacher in Mount Vernon schools, on June 19, 2016 in Mount Vernon. **Tim Sawyer**, 67, a teacher overseas who retired in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia, on June 24, 2016.

1995 – Margaret Kathleen Freeman, 51, an English teacher at Bellingham High School, on June 26, 2016.

1998 – Cory Landers, 40, who worked for 15 years in the banking industry, on May 21, 2016, in Seattle.

2013 – Charles Rhett Richards, 28, on July 30, 2016.

2014 – Nicholas Henry Vitulli, 24, who worked at Expedia, on Oct. 23, 2016.

Campus School

Dan R. Olson, 86, a retired attorney in Bellingham and Friday Harbor, on Aug. 13, 2016, in Bellingham.

Irving Hawley, 73, retired from Hewlett-Packard Co., on April 6, 2016, in Bellingham.

Faculty and Staff

Charles H. Antholt, 74, a senior instructor in the College of Business and Economics, specializing in international agriculture and rural development, on Nov. 12, 2016.

Thomas J. "TJ" Olney, 64, who recently retired as associate professor of Marketing, on July 13 in Skagit County after a paragliding accident near Samish Overlook on Blanchard Mountain. He had spent 30 years teaching at Western.

Merle Prim, 84, a professor emeritus of Psychology who taught at Western for 42 years and led a research lab focused on physiological psychology, neuroscience and animal learning, on Oct. 2, 2016, in Bellingham.

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The Blue Barnacles were a synchronized swimming club from the 1940s to the 1970s.



The Blue Barnacles

Western's swimming and diving club adopted the name Blue Barnacles in 1937. By 1946, just as champion swimmer Esther Williams was becoming a movie star with her intricate on-screen water ballet routines, the Blue Barnacles were devoted to synchronized swimming.

The co-ed group practiced in the College Pool in Carver Gymnasium and at least once a year produced a major show that drew more than 200 audience members a night to the pool decks. Those in the know brought towels and plastic tarps to keep themselves dry from all the splashing.

The 1965 production, "Aquapations," ran for three nights and included a beachy, surfing number called "Waikiki Wipeout." Later, an 11-person routine about workplace romance shenanigans, "After Office Hours," was followed by a romantic duet performance of "Theme from Romeo and Juliet." The finale, "The Hive Comes Alive," included 31 performers in the Carver Gym pool.

The Blue Barnacles were a campus fixture until about 1972, when the group disbanded as Title IX was creating more formal opportunities for women in athletics.



SAVE THE DATE

JANUARY 21
2017

Vikings for Life

APPRECIATION RECEPTION & DINNER

Western Washington University invites Alumni Association Life Members to a Reception & Dinner to honor their membership contribution on Saturday, January 21, 2017 on Western's Campus.

This event will be a special opportunity to meet Western President Sabah Randhawa and his wife, Uzma.

Featuring

Dr. Ira Hyman
Professor, WWU Department of Psychology

To be included in this event,
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Western's
Rising Star
in the Windy City

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